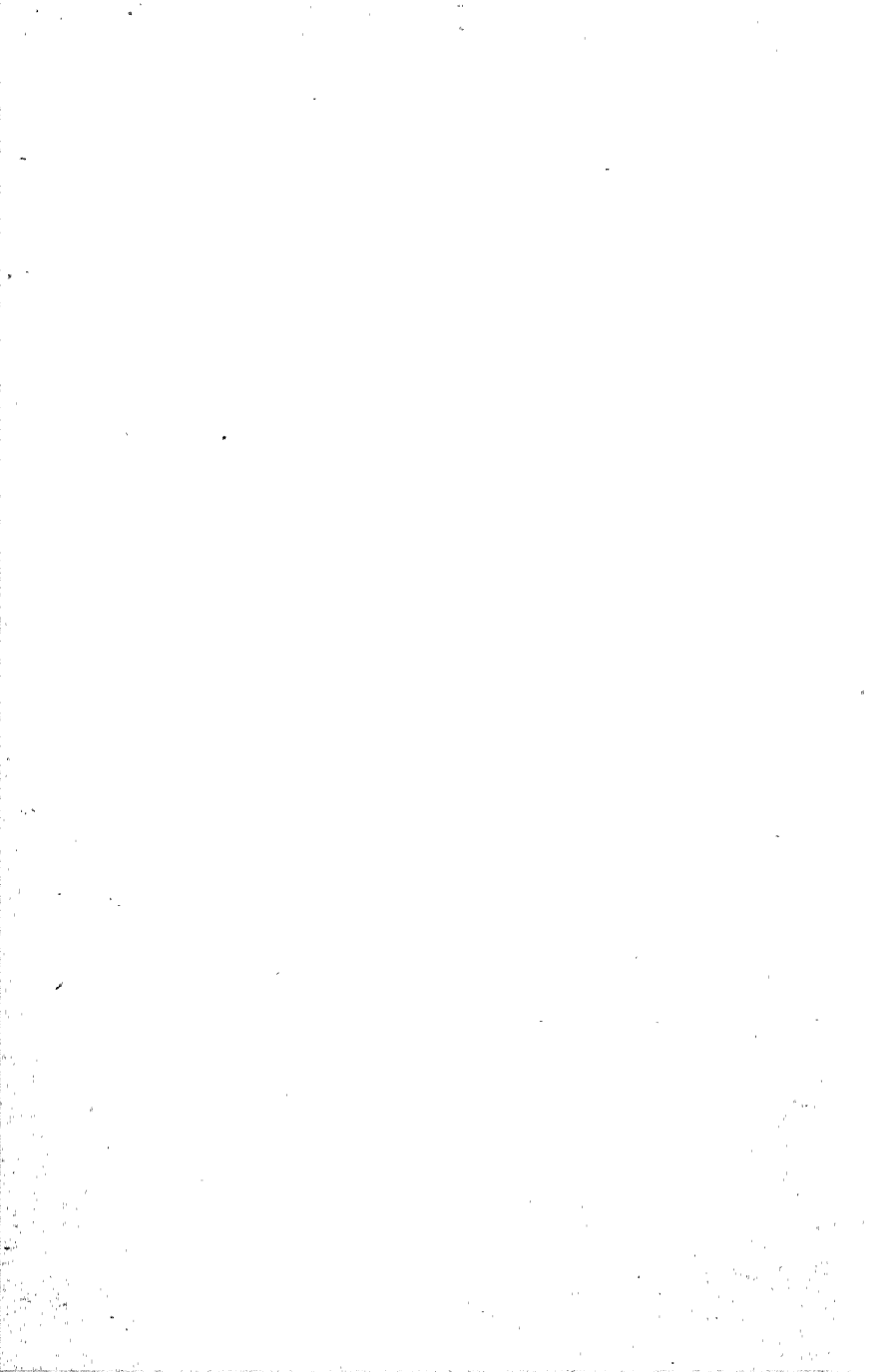




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SOUTH AMERICAN JOURNEY

by

WALDO FRANK

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FOREWORD

WHY THE JOURNEY?

I got the news about Pearl Harbour a day late. I was in my house on Cape Cod, alone; and deep at last in a novel I had planned since my youth, whose hero (or is it heroine?) will be New York. My solitude was too busy for the radio. Now, chance or blind sense moved me to turn it on; and I became aware of the voice of President Roosevelt asking Congress for war on Japan. I have just read over the pages of my journal for those days. I find no mention of Pearl Harbour; nor of the President's anger at Japan's "treacherous" attack, in a war in which the American people had been involved for years. The knowledge that this war was ours had been the chief cause of my long delay in getting to the novel. It had made me work and plead for Spain's Republic in America, in France, in England. It had sent me to Spain. It had inspired articles like "Our Guilt in Fascism" and the book *Chart for Rough Water*; on the premise that if we truly understood what the war was, and our grim responsibility, we might still be saved from its universal spreading. Finally, my submission to the knowledge that total war was here for the whole world—the tragic form of its self-condemnation—had sent me in the fall of 1941 to write the novel in my Truro house.

But half a year before Pearl Harbour, the letters from South America, particularly Argentina, had grown urgent. The continent, said my friends, was subdued and divided, blind to the rising tide of danger. Many of the Latin American governments, including some which appeared most "cooperative" with Washington, looked with admiration on the Fascists and Nazis. None of the people had more than aloof sympathy for Britain, fighting, they thought, for her own Empire. None looked with clarity to the United States, whose role, slow-forged, of saviour of democracy, did not fit the Hispano-American conception of the part we had played, not so long ago, in Cuba, Mexico, Panama, Nicaragua.

The destiny of the American hemisphere, its common *democratic* destiny, was an old story to the children of Bolívar. And now for twenty years, from Mexico to Argentina and Chile, they had listened with generous understanding to a Yankee who came to them, first in his writings, then in person, to tell the old story in new

terms. "Come down, now!" the letters urged. "Tell it again, in the new terms: terms of the blood and danger—and hope—of our day and tomorrow."

In the winter of 1940-41, friends here added voice to friends there:

"You must go!"

I answered: "Of that kind of work, for the time being, I have done my share. If what I had to say on the state of the world meant something to you, it was because you felt my words rooted in the experience of the artist. Now let the artist carry on."

Since I was arguing, they knew that I was weakening. They set to work in Buenos Aires; soon I received a plan of lectures for the entire country; and projects for other lands: Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, Peru. I found myself in a heavy sea-swell southward. I even—just in case I did go—engaged passage. (In those remote days of 1941, the delight of a voyage was still possible in American waters, and during the long sail I could prepare my lectures.) In April, my trip was sealed. I walked three days in a cloud of conflict through the city; then cabled my friends in Buenos Aires: "I cannot come."

Within a month I had cleared decks and was running before what seemed a full-bodied breeze toward the novel. But it was not clear sailing. My friends in Argentina, after my cable, answered me with silence. This troubled me, because my conscience troubled me. The silence became an eloquent reproach. In my journal for the summer months of 1941 I wrote intricate arguments of defence for what I had done, or rather, for what I had refused. I find, as I re-read, the points convincing, and that they did not convince me.

Nevertheless, when the Japs struck Hawaii, I was deep in my novel. I put the manuscript away, and went to New York. There I found a friend who had just flown up from Argentina. Tota Cuevas de Vera is an archetypical daughter of the pampa: too much land, too much money, too much intelligence and conscience, and too little brave simplicity to get rid of the conflicting parts of her burden. When her husband, a grandee of Spain, sided with Franco, Tota tore up her home and returned to her estancias with her children. "I wish them to be democrats," she said.

I watched Tota, hidden away in her stiff, modish suit, in her hat that barred her eyes, in her make-up that masked a sensitive mouth; and waited to hear her tell me why my dearest friends in Buenos Aires did not write. She told me. They were hurt, a little angry, a good deal worried.

"You see, we counted on you. You have taught us to count on you."

After the New Year of 1942, I went on a brief lecture tour. In Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, the industrial core of our land, I spoke of the "War Beneath the War," the Deep War whose

victory alone can justify the war of the armies and politicians. I explained this crisis of Man, the deepest, the most dangerous, the most hopeful, since history; and our solemn part in it. In typical towns: Columbus, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, I exchanged visions with young labour leaders, with new men and women trying to wed local politics with the social services and the spirit of school and church. We all knew that collectivism was here; no use preaching for or against it. The challenge was to build the collective world, made inevitable by machine production, so that Man, and not slaves and not hordes, might live in it.

Good talk till the small hours, over the glass of beer, the dish of tea. And good news for me: this finding, everywhere in my own land, the working men and women with their eyes open to the need of laying the foundations for an American culture.

There was straight talk, too, of literature and the arts—and religion. I had the sense as never before of touch with a *mind* in the American folk. Childish, more often than childlike; clumsy; spoiled in its tastes; petulantly rejecting what was good for it, then despising the cheap sweets it fed on, and sullen for something better, I felt it stir toward the real.

In Chicago, a woman came to see me who can speak for many. She told me of the poor farm she was raised on, in a remote corner of Kentucky; how her illiterate father (she spoke with veneration) sold all his hens to give her the few dollars she needed to travel to the nearest school and learn how to read and write. Now she was a teacher of English; and she had come from Louisville to get certain data from me. This child of illiterate poor whites, and Tota, the South American wife of a Spanish nobleman: under the differences of breeding and experience, how alike were their realism, their search, their good will, and the pathos of their conflict.

Most of the people with whom I talked were clumsy about expressing their deep need: the need of a basic creative vision to solidify their work and energize the country with it, not as a mechanical organization, but as a living organism whose destiny must be democratic. For most of them, their immediate jobs for winning the war were enough. But what good anxiety was in them; what generous hunger! And they listened, their minds open and ready, with love in their receiving, with love in their responding. No. I did not wish to leave my country at this hour; and I was beginning to be aware that I must leave it. I was busy here. My America in this hour of death and birth filled me. I knew, as I went from town to town: soon I shall be flying southward.

The reasons were still all against it: the superficial ones, easy to classify and roll off the tongue. But the grain of what I was doing ran at this moment southward. The grain of the writing of the novel of New York, and of leaving the novel after the years of bringing it to life; the revisiting my country; the renewed touch with its youth, with its generous dream, and the helping it—the

hard way—without dogma, to find form; the revealing again, as best I could, the Deep War which alone shall sanctify our lives and our deaths as we dare fight it. Of all this, my share in the organic destiny of my loved land, the grain was running southward; the grain soon would be a southward journey.

It was not necessary to know more, beforehand: it was necessary only to go forward.

CHAPTER I
THE FACE OF BRAZIL

*The Amazon — Belém do Pará — Natal — Vitoria
Rio — São Paulo — Minas Geraes — May Day in Rio*

THE AMAZON

At fifteen thousand feet, in a stratoliner, one looks *down* a greater distance at the clouds than ordinarily one looks *up* at them. Habit turns the down into up. The sky, which is always beyond the clouds, is now "below" them; it is viscous, corrugated (actually it is the sea). But the sun is in the wrong place, being still "up" by the old measure. Disorientation. The globe becomes unreal; the plane is the one base of reality, the solid and substantial. Globe and sky are one ethereal solution; islands in the sea are indistinguishable from clouds in the sky. Suddenly, I know that the air is of earth; no less than the mole burrowing in soil, our stratoliner is earth-bound. My person, losing its habitual props, pales. I am in a more dim world—a no less true.

It is hard from this height to find the mouths of the Orinoco. Lower Venezuela seems to be a maze of marsh and many waters. Not far from this coast is a town, now Ciudad Bolívar, once called Angostura. I wish I could see it. I see its hero, Simón Bolívar: thrown ignominiously out of Bogotá and Caracas, his revolution seemingly a failure, he escapes with a few faithful to this green wilderness; and at this end of a world, pens his immortal Project for a new one, a hemisphere of free men. That was a century and a quarter ago. The Orinoco still floods the lush lowlands. In the service of that dreamed, destined, unborn America ("Come and tell us again, in terms of today"), I am flying southward.

How close in vision and love, Bolívar to Roger Williams, Anne Hutchinson, all our passionate northern priests and poets, of whom Bolívar never heard! In way of life and in expression, how remote! Lincoln had a kindred love and vision; not one of our revolutionary fathers, not even Jefferson, had it. The early northmen of that deep dream were priests; the later ones (Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau) were poets. In the forming of our Republic the sword and the statesman's mace were left to "practical men." And in this difference of political action by "specialists" and by "dreamers" who infused and confused action with poetry, lies much of the different political destinies of the Americas.

At Georgetown, British Guiana, American soldiers in the hot sun, in dugouts of the hotter sand, guard anti-aircraft guns; and toss dry jokes at their fellow countryman in a Miami Beach hat.

At Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana, the soldiers are Dutch—black or white; and the Negroes stolid and gentle as all Dutchmen. Over French Guiana, I peer through ribbed clouds in vain for a glimpse of Devil's Island or Cayenne. All I see is canebrake and jungle, a green slime on a brown globe. No mark of man; this seems a world for crocodiles. With Brazil nearing, we run into storm.

The horizon is the cloud-summits, saffron and scarlet. (Clouds in the tropics drive upward or plunge downward.) Below this horizon is the sea (of cloud) and our ship a sea gull skimming it. The earth is gone. As we go down into the cloud-sea it is iron-grey; not sea but mountain. Under the pale violet death of the free sky above, it is now black as we plunge deeper in it. Storm makes this black solid, savage and jagged. Our ship, while the shrieking rain lashes us, seems to be shattering down a mountain.

This violence of water and wind, night and sun, is the air over Brazil. And now I know I shall have to change my plans. I am on my way to Argentina: my first speaking appearances—a banquet by the S.A.D.E. (Sociedad Argentina de Escritores) and the inaugural lecture—are already scheduled. I have about two weeks' grace in which to work on my early speeches, before the whirlwind that I know awaits me on my arrival in Buenos Aires. My plan is to write them in Petropolis, high in the mountains above Rio, in the house of my friend, Gabriela Mistral. She has cabled me, and I have accepted. It's a good plan. Like ballast from the tossed ship, I drop it.

In place of it:

Rule for this journey: Do not press. Let the people, the places, the problems, the hot and the cold, come in to you. Do not worry about the lectures. You do not *know* this journey. The closer you get to your public and your problems before you write your speeches the better your word will be.

We are above Brazil, nearing the continent's Mediterranean: the haemal Amazon. We are scheduled to spend the night in Belém, capital of the state of Pará; leave before sunbreak; hop the Bulge, with one stop at Barreiras (Barreiras is in Baía), to Rio. That's my plan. That's how my ticket reads. And these days, when priority of priorities is needed to get on the planes at all, one doesn't change one's itinerary for a whim. Nevertheless, I know. *The Rio plane leaves tomorrow without me.* I can't vault the Amazon, blow North Brazil out of my sight with a few turns of the propeller, even though the job immediately ahead is Argentina.

The steward is near by, comforting a lady who, with the storm, has taken the posture of expectant death (body prone, hands over face). He sits down beside me, and I tell him I'll stay over in Belém; go on by the slower coast plane (Natal-Recife-Bahía) to Rio. He thinks; well, maybe, with my good priority, I can get a place, two, three days.

Meantime, we've run out of storm into a sky, cool and white as

God's first evening. To the west, hiding the sun, is a black cloud bank; east, the firmament pales, limpid and wintry, downward; becomes mist; thickens vastly below into earth. The earth, which is Brazil, as we descend, swells toward us. Suddenly from the cloud bank, the sun thrusts. The opaque purple ceiling of the sky, more remote than death, it touches to light, the higher clouds into enflamed hands, the clouds below into splashed flares illumining the breast of Brazil.

Again, the sun is gone. Our motors soften and we sink into twilight. Earth is far from us; nervous, vital, dark as a womb. Earth, I see, is River.

It is brown water, colour of earth: a continent bleeding. It is many waters. The main north artery (it turns the Atlantic sweet two hundred miles from shore) is nothing; the Amazons are a vast conquering, a vast intricate seeping, the transfusion of earth. Veins wander, cross, return upon themselves; trace delirious patterns in the green flesh of the jungle. Here, for instance, over the land is the design of a tree: bole, many branches, infinite foliage . . . all river: immense as nightmare.

We fly over Marajó, an island within the Amazonian water (the main stream and the Pará) larger than Belgium. Night rushes from earth, pushing the day upward; conquering and consolidating earth. Now night wins the lower clouds. Until only the high heaven holds an ember of day.

BELÉM DO PARÁ — NATAL — VITORIA

The heart of Belém is the market-place, *Docas de Ver o Peso*: "docks for seeing the weights." The graceful little sailboats; parallelograms and triangles of blue, maroon, orange; the hulls roughhewn by hand from the dark Amazon wood, crowd and toss in the levee. They bring fish, pottery, charcoal; they load ice, sugar, coffee. Down the Pará, ninety miles, is the sea; and across is the low lush cattle island, Marajó, laced with inlets, lakes, canoe-trails of the Amazons. Between the boats and the pier, in opalescent water thick with debris of commerce: cuia gourds, oranges, manioc roots, entrails, the urubú—Brazilian buzzards—wheel and dip; black, wise birds with red heads to show the carnality of their brains. On three sides, the port is ensconced in city; in mouldering houses courteous with blue tiles, pretentious with cupolas and turrets; in cafés and a church and a kiosk over the tram-station whence a loudspeaker fills the air with *sambas*.

The folk . . . this is the folk of Brazil! colour of cinnamon and earth, silent as earth, earth-strong, earth-sick with the languorous longing of all earth to emerge and transcend itself: whether in trees, in bodies or in dream. A telluric people!

There is some Negro blood; there is none of the lyric and liquid ebullience of the Negro. There is much white; the sailors—stripped

to the waist, with trousers colour of loam under the canebrake, and the sweet sweat of their elastic bodies—the sailors are predominantly white. But there is none of the nerve-tension of Europe's races. This folk is Brazil; and the tone and temper Indian! I do not know how much actual Indian blood there is; very little, I believe.* How strong must be the power of this mighty earth! For here are men with skull and skin of Africa; yet their inward world is Indian, closer to a Mexican *mercado* than to what their forefathers knew in Nigeria or Angola. Here are men and women racially Portuguese, and their rhythms of no Portugal. The quays are packed with buyers and sellers; in silence. Men, women, children, live fowl and the urubú (the intellectuals of the Brazilian fauna) mingle with spice, fruit, roots, meal-cakes, palm-honey, slaughtered beeves, and the white venom-alcohol, *cachaça*, in one tissue element that plays loud on the senses from sight to smell; only the sense of sound is subdued, as in the jungle.

Lovely cones, higher than the men, woven of banana leaves and of straw, hold the charcoal and the manioc. But for the most part, the wares lack beauty. Piles of earthenware, without grace; silverware, textiles: not gracious as in the markets of Central America and Peru. Plenty of shoddy, plenty of brummagem. An Indian world; *but is the Indian at home here?*

Only the *samba* music, over the muffled scene, is lovely: a vertebral, muscular, complex deep music, that makes our folksongs—even the best—by contrast inarticulate mumblings. Samba is dominantly Brazilian, with all its major Negro and minor Indian and Portuguese strains transfigured. And the girls and the young women, with the long black hair and the honey skin and the hurt eyes, are beautiful as perhaps no other women in the world. The folk is not healthy. Malaria, hookworm (the naked children have swollen stomachs), cannot explain what I feel; they are merely somatic symptoms of some deep unease in this *Indianized* people.

Near the Port is a park, fringed by a convent, a church, mansions, all decayed, of the colonial era. For breath away from the intense market, I go there and sit on a bench in the shade. (Belém, one degree under the Equator, is warm, never hot; the trade winds temper it.) I am joined by a young, dark woman, intelligent, gay, cadaverous (there are few fat people in Brazil). She is a laundress out of work, twenty-six, living with her mother. Unmarried. I ask her why. Africa peals suddenly from her laughter: irony, sensuality, controlled and utterly accepted. (I find I can understand more of the Brazilian folk-Portuguese than I imagined.) She tells me she had had no coffee this morning; I give her a milreis.† She sticks out a bare, skinny leg with its wood clog, the footwear of the

* I learned later that I was wrong; throughout all the mass of Brazil from the States of Pará, Amazonas and Maranhão south to Minas Geraes and Mato Grosso, there is more Indian blood than I suspected.

† Worth about five cents.

poor. Shoes, she slyly informs me, cost six milreis. She is trying to "do me" but all in good cheer. I give her six milreis. Now she runs her brown hand, sensitive and receptive like an animal's mouth, down her poor black shift. I laugh at her and she does not tell me the cost of a new dress. The Portuguese, unlike the Spanish, are a commercial-minded folk. This inherited trait, too, has been transfigured. The young woman, I feel, is employing commercial symbols for some playful, utterly uncommercial end.

I stroll back to the market. The Marajó woodwork is poor; the butterfly jewelry is atrocious; the alligator-skin art is, for the most part, in bad taste and for the tourist. This folk is poor; not in food (manioc, banana, fish) but in clothes and in health. How poor, I cannot guess, here in Belém.

The waters of the Pará are cinnamon under the sun. The Pará is not strictly Amazon. Except in the season of rains, when the great Amazons rise fifty feet, flood a million square miles of jungle, and pour through the Marajó canals, the Pará gets most of its huge water from the Tocantins whose source is fifteen hundred miles to the south in Goyaz. The Tocantins is a normal river; the Amazons is a mediterranean sea. Vicente Yañez Pinzón, the Spaniard, who first discovered it in 1500, named it well: *Mar Dulce*. Orellano, the Spaniard, who first descended it, from the Andes to the sea and on to Cuba, sailing from the Napo above the Pacific in boats that he built from jungle trees of Ecuador, misnamed it Amazonas; fierce women, he believed, had fought with their men against him, on his amazing journey.

An open tram, marked *Circular*, jounces me pleasantly about town. Its three-hundred-thousand inhabitants fit into their houses, like lizards in crevices of earth. Yes: a telluric people. Its energies seem to be horizontal and inward (the samba); whereas those of Spanish America are overt and perpendicular. (Argentina is both horizontal and perpendicular, like the United States.) The streets are stately with their mango trees; the trees more expressive, more active than the gentle people. (I recall Hart Crane's great poem on the mango. It is a tree to express the immensity of a virgin continent, and the secret subtlety of a virgin people. I believe its original home is India. But here it is at its best.) There are a few broad avenues, where rubber millionaires (mostly Portuguese) built garish palaces in the good old days when Amazon rubber shod the wheels of the world. There are innumerable quiet streets, folk streets, smothered in banana and bamboo, barely emergent from the jungle; and the folk flow easeful, from the stone and brick, upon their long, humble tides of living.

At the zoo, famous for its Amazonian specimens, I glimpse an extraordinary truth: these beasts, birds, reptiles, seem at home! Many little creatures are free to roam about; but the caged ones, the cramped ones, too, are strangely relaxed, as if they were less alien to the folk than the beasts of other zoos. What does this mean?

Have the folk of Brazil, returning to earth and drawing the earth to them, an original earth-relation? a new destiny in psychology and culture? I watched the little Amazonian monkeys: howlers, scarlet-face, spider-monkeys, marmosets, being fed a paste of meal with corn grains in it. Each grabs a huge lump and races up the bars for safety from the others; none dreams of eating close to its neighbours—perhaps lover, parent, child. The frenzy of each for himself, here in animal nakedness! And man's tragedy of struggle to emerge from it; the struggle itself so sharply different from the animal in his essence.

This thought I take back with me to the hotel. The Grande Hotel is full of American soldiers, American fliers, American engineers. After dinner they sit on the mild street at tables with beer and whisky, and soak in their own talk. How many have ever gone down to the *Docas de Ver o Peso*? or down the side-blocks a step away, where the folk stand within the sambas of the little cafés—in the dark gutters under their low, poor, unlit homes—and let their gentle words (that sing so much like Russian!) and their hurt eyes and their hands re-weave the ever-breaking, ever-mended human harmony between them?

The whole town prepares for tomorrow's celebration of Getulio Vargas' birthday. Boys and girls (these, in pretty blue skirts, white blouses) march up and down the Praça da República, behind a drum corps. Gaiety and ease (these are children of the burghers, not of the terrible sertão, not of the mortal jungle, that are nine-tenths of Brazil). A less warlike folk I cannot imagine. In all my hours, thus far, at market and in crowded street, I have seen one quarrel. At a store where I had my shoes shined, the *patrão* was waging battle with one of the bootblacks. The man was very angry and the lad received his abuse gaily; then the man grew gay, the lad angry, until again the moods shifted. It was a war, lengthy, low-keyed, without issue. Irrelevantly, no doubt, it made me think of the fabulous thirty-months' march of the Column of Luiz Carlos Prestes through fifteen thousand miles of Brazil: a desperate, issueless, beautiful revolutionary gesture one would have to go, perhaps, to China to unravel. No! One would have to go to Brazil! Here I am on the surface . . . the *face* of Brazil! My conscience hurts. Argentina summons. . . .

Belém's society gathers tonight at the hotel to rehearse for the Vargas birthday celebration: it is to be a benefit for the British Red Cross. A beautiful blonde (with that undertone and tide of Brazilian darkness astir in her skin, sings "My Old Kentucky Home," "The Bonnie Braes of Loch Lomond," and other Scotch ditties. The big smash is the American song, "How Lovely"; it goes on interminably while a battalion of virgins one by one walk out into the spotlight, turn on a little raft in the centre of the dance-floor, imitating the struts of Hollywood models. At balcony tables,

wreathing the floor, sit the mothers and the youths. The girls are dressed, to the fall of the hair clasped in invisible snoods, like U.S.A. They are pretty and soft; a few exceptions, mostly plain, show the intelligence and wilfulness of the "moderns." Free they are, all, in their deep acceptance of their sex; and in this, different from our women. The American man does not like woman. He uses her, of course, sexually, as mother or as comrade. The essential woman he does not care for, or fears. By a dangerous selection of generations, he has made our women unaccepting of their sex. A child, about seven, dances a tap dance badly. Not a single note of Brazil in the whole show.

I feel it again, as on my previous visits: the Brazilians, perhaps alone of all Ibero-America, admire the United States. (I refer of course to the upper classes, since the folk in Brazil are hardly aware of our existence.) They dream of rivalry, *on the same terms*. "Aren't we as big? aren't we as rich in resources? aren't we increasing by leaps and bounds in population?"

The one hope is in the *folk* Brazil, which has never heard of the United States and has never heard the word "democracy"—possessing a brand of it more elemental than ours. But this is not "hope"; this is destiny. Brazil's democracy is neither political nor economic. It does not wipe out the colour-line—which is entirely economic and in full view, here in Belé. By and large, the humble workers are dark; the white collar folk are light like honey. The exceptions are the poorest and the proudest: the *caboclos* of the gay-sailed boats. Their Indian-Portuguese strain has none or little of Africa. I suspect the Africans make poor mariners, a natural result of immemorial life in a continent with few harbours.

Harbours mean communication; communication means cultural fertilization. The "backwardness" of Africa, the "forwardness" of the whole Mediterranean world, have as one of their many complex causes the respective lack and profusion of harbours.

By the way, Greece had probably more protected indentations on its coasts and islands than any equivalent bit of land on earth. Palestine seems to refute my idea; but it had other intense means of entry; indeed it lay on the crossroads between potent empires: Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Persia. The great Amerindian cultures of Mexico and Peru were centred on high plateaus far from the sea; and their comparative isolation doubtless fed the psychological inflexibility which helped to make them fall before the dynamic, seafaring Spaniard.

The Avenida Tito Franco is a delight. On either side, under the ubiquitous mango, runs the railroad to Bragança; the houses are mansions that seem as close to the jungle as the palms, the sumau-meras, the bananas, the seringueiras. And here is the Parque Rodrigues Alves, where the actual jungle is preserved! Great trees with stall-like flying-buttress base; assaí, the palm from which the

liquor of the cabaclos is brewed, and the pungent, deep vermilion-coloured drink, taken with sugar or tapioca: subtle as the eyes of a north Brazilian half-breed. To drink this is to drink Brazil. The saying:

*Quem chegou no Pará, parou,
Tomou assaí, ficou.**

Innumerable trees; why name them? They are all strong, vertical ascendancies from earth, related to man's will and man's dream. And within them, making the jungle night at noon, monkeys, parrots, parakeets; tapirs at freedom. (I touch one who sniffs at me for ants; his hide is hard as mahogany.) Occasionally, the noisy macaws stop for breath; then I hear the dulcet *bem te vi* that one hears everywhere, I am told, in Brazil: the avicular welcome. So here, at last, I am in the Amazonian jungle. (I fool myself; this is not jungle; one can walk, here, on the underbrush earth: in the true jungle each step is a fight and dubious victory.)

Nevertheless, here, in the leisure of this humanized jungle, my meditation grows. I have the sense of nature's infinite sadness; of all animal life imprisoned in it. Karma! This tropic nature is hostile to man. The East Indian responded by denying it; placed all his values *outside, above*. That is Hindu transcendentalism. The African merged and fused. The Hindu sense of Karma and Maya: life as doom seems inevitable in the tropics for the human spirit which would be free and yet has no technics to master the tropics. The "gay" tropics? Nonsense. In these animals, I feel the deadly seriousness, the ruthless, quiet and perpetual panic of *being caught* in life: the classic mood of the tropic.

The Indian of Panama and the Carib sea (the Chibcha, for instance), unlike the East Indian, accepts fusion with a nature he can neither master nor escape. Hindu culture, in its classic form, is refusal of this deadly mastering nature; is elaborate intellectualization and systematization of this refusal. The Negro in Africa accepted with an æsthetic, emotional, organic adjustment, to whose dignity and value the white man has been blind. The Brazilian? He cannot accept nature on the African's purely emotional-æsthetic level: there is in him too much of the intellectual white man. He cannot refuse nature in the transcendental terms of the Hindu; there is in him too much of Africa and the Amerindian. Again, I feel here the beginnings of one of those marriages of the spirit, of two spirits, which are fertile as the marriage of bodies. Already, in the past, I prophesied a new culture-birth in Brazil. Now again. . . . If only I could remain; study. . . .

High in a sumaumera tree, a red-faced monkey chatters down at me. How nimble he is! and how ill-at-ease his little restless, helpless and unconscious soul! Verily, God is in that monkey; and

* Who comes to Pará stops,
Takes assaí; remains.

in the Brazilian man and woman is the tree lifting earth into leaf and blossom and sky!

With heavy heart, through the dark rain of the hours before dawn, I leave Belém. The muddy road and the dripping bush cradle the car forward. A sentinel stops us and peers in; lets us pass. I do not want to leave Belém. I have seen the face of the Amazon; and there are faces that tell their story; and other faces that do not tell; that invite one inward, passionately, deeply. This face of north Brazil has haunted me, like the hallucination which time and sharper waking proves to be, not fantasy, but fact: haunted me long with the need to penetrate its truth.

Years ago, when I was passing through Rio, I received an invitation to revisit Brazil.

"When I can spend at least six months on the Amazon," was my answer.

"But you know the Amazon! In your book, *America Hispana*, the chapter on the Amazon, on the Forest, has been quoted scores of times by our best critics. Gilberto Freyre, our master-sociologist, in his greatest book, *Casa Grande y Senzala*, praises your knowledge of north Brazil and of its density in our nascent culture."

I hang my head. "I have never seen the Amazon."

"But——"

"How,"—I find I am embarrassed—"how could I write a book about *America Hispana*, and leave out the Amazon? I make confession, now. I believe it is the one time in my literary career I have been guilty of this. I describe the Amazon, and I have never seen it."

"No," came the accurate Brazilian reply, "somehow you *saw* it."

I have never been satisfied; I leave Belém for my job in Argentina, heavy of heart. I have known Rio, São Paulo, Santos. These are lands, thousands of miles south; farther from the Amazon than the Amazon from Miami. Yet my days here have told me how true was my intuition: Brazil is one land, one country. Pará is in the students of Rio, most of whom have never seen it; Pará is in the coffee-women sorting the pungent brown berries in Santos. I want to understand; and I do not understand.

Brazil: I can tell you what it is not, what it has not been. It has had no heroic revolution; not when it cut free from Portugal, not when it changed from empire to republic. When it freed its slaves (the last of them in 1888) it had no civil war. It has had no great warrior or statesmen heroes: no San Martín, no Bolívar, no Sucre, no Hildalgo, no Sarmiento, no O'Higgins, no Juárez, no Cárdenas; not even a titan-dictator Rosas or madmen like Paraguay's Francia and López. It *has* had great promoters like the financier Mauá; great diplomats like Rio Branco (its diplomats are America's best). A canny race? But also it has Prestes, a saintly intellectual engineer

with the greatest military exploit since Bolívar to his credit. And Aleijadinho, the mulatto leper whose sculptures and churches in Minas Geraes made him probably the greatest plastic artist born in the Americas since the conquest. No, I do not understand Brazil, whatever Brazil's poetic critics may have found in a few of my pages. Until I know the Amazon, Bahia, the sertão, I shall never know Brazil. And the plane wings me southward. . . .

We follow the coast, the vast face of Brazil. The first stop is São Luiz, capital of Maranhão, like Pará and Amazonas, an Amazonian state of flesh-solid jungle and huge waters. From this little port, in peace times, goes the *babaçu*, an oil-nut whose future may be as phenomenal as the soybean's. Babaçu makes solid forests in Maranhão. On twenty-one million acres in the state, there are thirteen million babaçu palms, yielding annually thirteen trillion nuts, one-hundred-ninety-five million tons of kernels. Since the babaçu gives a fibre for rope and carpets, and is a substitute cotton for textiles; since its oil makes soap, oleomargarine, and other food-stuffs, and excellent fuel for Diesels, the potential wealth of the state can be imagined. The town looks Italian, with its coral-slate roofs and its gay sails in the harbour: more mediterranean than Atlantic. Now suddenly, we leave lushness for drouth. Piauí and Ceará are the dryest and poorest states of the union; the classic states of the sertão. Here, that fierce land of cactus and horned trees comes down to the sea; in all the other states, sertão is inland about a hundred miles.

In Camocim, I have a look at the *carnauba*, the strange palm whose wax makes our phonograph records. When the drouth breaks, the carnauba dies; water is its foe. Therefore in Ceará where it rains every two years or so, there are carnauba forests; the wax is the state's main wealth. We stop at Areia Branca: arid. The "white sand" is salt.

At the Bulge, the rains return; once again the face of Brazil is a lovely, cultivated garden—rolling, however, inland within fifty to a hundred miles to sertão.

We have been delayed by strong head winds; we shall spend the night in Natal, capital of Rio Grande do Norte.

A clipper, a huge grey whale, is ready to take off for Sierra Leone, Africa, eighteen hundred miles away (Buenos Aires is nearly a thousand miles more distant). Bombs have been found on these ferries (Brazil is full of saboteurs), but no one stops me when I innocently walk aboard and look around. Along the coast and the river, through the clipper's windows, I see the white tents of American soldiers.

The town rises on a hill in neat pink and blue houses; there's an old church with elaborate Manueline façade (most of this Portuguese architecture, in the north, expresses tenderness and nostalgia, not power of depth). The main boulevard is lined with rubbery

jambeiros, whose natural pyramid shape, trimmed to poodle-dog fineness, makes them popular in Brazil. A bland, soft folk seem the Natalenses; not as rich or deep as Pará's. And over this gentleness, a black patrol plane roars. War is irrelevant—and close.

Two lads promptly "adopt" me and show me the town. When I'm tired, we go on chatting in a café; I drink beer and they, the cloying, popular *Guarand*. A third lad, a bootblack, joins us. As he shines my shoes, he shows off his three words of English. For which he is paid profusely—a whole milreis!

As night rises like doom, we stand above the city toward the sea: the fishermen's boats, merged with the surface of the ocean, seem to be flying fishes. How fragile is man on the sea! and how courageous!

The hotel, as in Belém, is full of American soldiers. Twenty of us will bunk tonight on cots in the dining room. The food, as in Belém, is coarse and tasteless. After dinner, I take a chair into the mild June-like night. Across from the hotel, in a park, is a small church. The door is open; I see the priest officiate at benediction, and hear the bells of the service. Beside the church is a municipal shelter; from its tower, as from the tram-station in Belém, a loudspeaker broadcasts music. A small number are with the priest; a large crowd stand before the *sambas*; men, women, children listening with that Indian fixity which here has less rigour. It is a fixity like the palm-tree's: flexible and fertile. The hard core of the folk music lives through and informs its saue and indolent surface; yet does not break it.

In a great culture, such values as these inhere in the cultivated arts and letters. Not in Brazil. The "bourgeois" arts, with exceptions rare but brilliant, are French, Portuguese and Spanish, or American adaptations. Alone, still insulate, is this potent music.

My mind goes back to the Amazon, nearly a thousand miles northwest, behind me. Low, slow, turbid with life, sudden yet seasonal with change, fed by all the sun-drawn waters of the ocean, driving a continent to the sea, the Amazon is a symbol. In its unawareness of man, in its effect upon him. How will Brazilian man assert himself, and yet not lose the Amazon in his soul?

A major problem, I can see, is the relation between Brazil and the other Ibero-American Republics. A problem not unconnected with the relation between the Brazilian earth and the Brazilian. Ibero-America must be strong, if the United States is to be nourished by it. And to be strong, between Brazil and the Spanish-speaking domain, there must be integration. I have the unpleasant sense of *fissure*.

The coastline of Brazil is lush and low. Vulnerable. At every river, there is a town: sailboats, small coastwise steamers. The towns are pretty with their red slate roofs and their pink-blue stucco . . . and dwindle off quickly into thatch huts within the palms and mangroves.

Recife, capital of Pernambuco, cultural capital of the north. Here lives Gilberto Freyre, Brazil's most influential social critic; here flourishes a school of poets. Recife is the centre of the region from which come the vital revolutionary novelists: José Americo, José Lins do Rego, Raquel de Queiroz, Jorge de Lima, Jorge Amado, et al.: the best group of novelists in South America today. And I on my way to Argentina.

Maceió, capital of Alagoas, small sugar state. Aracajú, capital of Sergipe, still smaller state; the town has seventy sugar mills. Here, the mighty river São Francisco—jugular of Brazil as the Amazon is its womb—turns into the sea. From the air, São Salvador, capital of Bahia and once capital of Brazil, seems a smaller, less dramatic Lisbon, rising on curbed bay and irregular hills from a water green-yellow with both the sun and the earth. We shall not make Rio tonight. We shall sleep in Vitoria, old seaport, capital of the little state, Espírito Santo, which bars the sea from the rich state, Minas Geraes.

Vitoria lies in a deep bay, narrow as a river, whose banks are sudden hills fumed with jungle. One of them has the characteristic shape of the Pão de Assucar in Rio's harbour. The town consists of very old and very new buildings: the modern . . . banks, offices, power-plants . . . has dignity. But the old gives the town its character: solid, sunken in self, with no lift, no nobility, no sordidness, either, and little dynamism beyond the natural power of the hills. For the first time on this journey, I see the workers . . . the port workers. Predominantly dark, they are passive and gentle. I understand the necessary frenzy of a true revolutionist like Prestes; nothing less than desperation marching through Brazil (with a thousand men against the nation's Army) could stir these earth-children. (Brazil's few great rebels, beginning with Tiradentes,* have been *agonists*.) The middle class here, more than in the north, dissociates itself from Brazil's earth and her earth-children. Here is visible the process that has made the south master of the country. In the north, all classes share the Forest. Now, the economically stronger groups approach the "Western" awakeness (which knows so little!).

RIO DE JANEIRO

Brazil, I repeat, was not on my work-itinerary. My plan for Brazil was to hide in the mountains of Petropolis; protected by anonymity and inspired by the staunch Andean spirit of my beloved friend, Gabriela Mistral, America's greatest living poet, to work at my Argentine and Chilean lectures. Therefore, I expected Gabriela

* Joaquim José da Xavier was known by this name because he was a dentist. Legend says he was a Jew. The Portuguese hanged him in 1792. He is the precursor of Brazilian independence.

at the Santos Dumont Airport. Therefore, I did not expect the large delegation of writers, intellectuals, newspapermen, photographers, representatives of the Foreign Office, of the Academy, of the Instituto Brasil-Estados Unidos, etc., who were there to greet me. Temístocles Graça Aranha, Minister for Intellectual Cooperation in the Itamaraty, the Foreign Office, was there to inform me that I was "guest of honour of Brazil."

This is somewhat upsetting. If I am Brazil's guest, not Gabriela's; and if Brazil shows signs of wanting to pay me some attention, how am I to hide away and work in Gabriela's villa? The trouble is deeper than that. What are my relations with the government of Getúlio Vargas, President of Brazil from 1930 to 1937, by grace of a popular revolution; dictator of Brazil since November 10, 1937, by an army coup d'état in which the Integralistas, the local fascists, helped him? It is true that Vargas turned against the fascists; sent their leader, Plínio Salgado, into exile. . . . But. . . . My one word with Getúlio Vargas, thus far, has been a cable, sent years ago, asking him to stop the alleged torture in prison of that saintly communist, Luiz Carlos Prestes, and to release him. Well: I didn't ask to be a guest of honour. I came fully prepared to pay my hotel bills. If the government insists on paying them, it will be, after all, with the *people's* money. And why should I not be the guest of the people of Brazil, whom I love, whom I would serve? And how serve them if first I do not learn to understand them? If I refuse this unsought and unexpected honour, I shall have small chance to *see* the people: one can't snub an authoritarian government, and get away with it—inside its borders.

Postscript: Why not have a look at the government, too, before passing judgment?

I am just in time for the feast day of São Jorge, the greatest of all the Saints in the hearts of the populace of Rio—the cariocas. This is the same Saint George who presides on the banners of the British Empire. There's some mistake. The cariocas consider George the especial patron of all men and women of colour. After what I saw in his great church on the Praça da República, I'm sure the Saint likes the cariocas, most of whom have a touch, if not a swab, of the tarbrush. The English had better change their banners . . . or their methods in Trinidad and Jamaica.

By nightfall, the streets leading to the Place of the Republic are crowded with a mass of men, women, children, mothers with babes in arms, who (without benefit of police to preserve order) line up and patiently wait their turn to enter the Church.

These are the streets of the people. Rio (I have essayed a portrait of the city's ineffable loveliness in *America Hispana*; I shall not try again) is a spill of streets among volcanic hills, within bays and beaches cut off from one another by the hills, which are rock, tree and palm. The hills are called morros. The low, populous precincts,

straggling up the morros, the arrogant new boulevards with tall apartments and immense rhetorical government buildings (wholly out of line with the land's stormy horizons) are a chaos unified by forest. The city's integer is forest, circumambient and invading, and the sea.

From the Praça da Republica, I have the town's heart before me, between the Morro de São Antonio, dishevelled slums on its breast, wild at the summit, and the Morro da Conceição. This steep hill stands within the commercial avenues: on its flank, a ruined eighteenth-century Bishop's palace, now a haven for the poor who make their homes in its cavernous bare walls split by bush and tree. On the farther flank, wind streets where the gentle poor quietly house: old-fashioned cabinet-makers, wives of mariners, postmen. At a window, beneath a parakeet, sits a girl in black, fragile as a lily; and smiles at the old man with pure, lean Arab face, who sells shrimp patties. But I am remembering this; I cannot *see* the girl, lovely as a lily, from the Praça da Republica. The streets near the Igreja de São Jorge, behind the immense and arrogant Ministry of War, are noisier, sultry: the purloins of thieves, of malandros drifted in from the sertões, and of the dangerously poor. Yet even here, the mellow flavour, Rio's odour of sun-warmed bananas. Even in the toughest alleys: as in the mango, the mamey, the papaya, the tang is in the softness.

At night, these streets are dark, save for a few shops. Boys build bonfires for lack of light between the wide-spaced lanterns, to see the girls as they pass. And the girls, lean and sweet does, stalk by; and the boys shift their belts, lengthen their torsos, point their antlers. In the dark rooms above, the women lie naked on their coverless beds and let their hungry babies crawl to their breasts. Then they place the babe, asleep with satiety, at the foot of the bed, and wait for their man to crawl to them. But this night, the holy night of Saint George, there is no love-making; and the babes must suck while their mothers walk; and the boys light no fires on the sultry streets, and the girls no fires in the hearts of the boys. All real carioca Rio converges to the Praça Tiradentes and the Praça da Republica: from São Antonio, the Mercado, the long-shoremen's shanties near the Praça Mauá, from Gloria, Cattete, the Fábrica das Chitas; from as far afield as São Christovão, where Rio takes on the somnolent permanent air of a provincial city.

We pass the long, steadfast waiting lines; and enter the church by a small door through the cloisters. We are pushed through the thick throng to the choir, directly facing the Saint's image; where we may stay while we wish.

"We" are my new friend, Vinicius de Moraes, one of the best of Brazil's poets;* an official in the "special police," apt at opening all doors for us; a friend of Vinicius whom I christen Mephisto

* On my return trip, Vinicius was my secretary and travelling companion.

because he looks like a gallant devil, and—with his guitar, his songs, his lore of women—acts the part; myself; and Edmée.

Edmée . . . if Renoir knew of her . . . would make the master leave his grave to paint one final picture. If that gay and great Frenchman's art was the apotheosis of fertile woman flesh, Edmée is the apotheosis of all Renoirs. She is large, her breasts round as apples, but far, far greater and with the consistency of peaches. Her head has that harmony of mellow mouth, sly and heavy eye, planturous mane, low forehead, which, in the best of the Renoirs, merges to one bouquet. Edmée's skin is the colour of dark honey.

The Saint is a gigantic equestrian toy, gaudily painted and bedecked: a boy's dream of a hobby-horse raised twenty-fold. From the Saint's hands and glittering paste sword, crimson ribbons flow down to the floor, where they are held by ladies. The ribbon-ends are medalled. And as the carioca in thronged single file reaches the Saint, a lady gives him the ribbon to be kissed. Workers, women, children, kiss the medal which is joined to the Saint, and are thereby blessed by the Saint. Nursing mothers press the medalled ribbon to the bud mouths of their babes.

The folk is low-keyed, contained within a kind of fulfilment. At times . . . rarely . . . this fulfilment bursts forth: a woman in ecstasy, a dark bent man beats palms together, his head and body a pulse, at last orgasmic. The throng in line watches these sparse phenomena, untouched in its quiet.

I could drink in this spectacle forever; only consideration for my friends at long last pries me away.

From the Church, we went to the *Mangue*, the home of the cheap whores. *Mangue* means mud; also it means mangrove, a marshy land by the sea. Along the two-storied houses of several streets, among them the Ruas Carmo Neto and Abilio Cavalcanti, the women stand behind open doors and windows, and in obscene detail cry their wares. They stand behind horizontal bars: indecently clad, in poor finery, in the warm light. They are Negresses, still blossoming; they are repulsive harridans advertising themselves as French; they are matronly women, loose-beamed, soft, with plain and kindly faces. These (I have noted the same phenomenon wherever the poor seek solace), not the pretty, not the young and the more vicious, get the most customers. Prostitution for men who work is more, far more, the seeking of a mother than of sexual delight. Three thousand they are, in the *Mangue* streets, in their dim cages! And from their gaols, they dart repartee, rough words and soft, abuse when the men insult them. The prevailing mood is of anger and gaiety, the anger and gaiety of despair. For these are lost souls, and know it (few lack a Cross on their naked breasts): the social garbage of a Catholic country.

Along the confines of the *Mangue*, patrol American marine police, to keep the gobs out. (Two American warships are in the harbour.)

"Where *do* our boys go?" I ask, as we return to the car. (Edmée has patiently awaited us; her presence in the *Mangue* streets would probably have caused a riot.)

Mephisto says: "We'll show you."

On the way, we visit a dance-hall whose hierophants are decayed middle-class cariocas. The music is dynamic and lean; the dancers are obtuse and clumsy. There is more tension, more nerve, more verve, in the *Mangue*.

Now we are in a district of the *pensões*. They are detached villas, stone or brick, not unlike the homes of small *rentiers* in Surrey and Hampstead, or of professors in a German university town. We cross a garden plethoric in the night with tropic flowers; we climb a stair balustraded in carved iron. At the tables in the packed foyer are American sailors in white, very drunk. Over them, brushing their wet hair from their brows, mopping up the overturned glass, are the girls: silk over nakedness. They are neither prettier nor less tough than the caged bitches of the *Mangue*; let us hope they are more hygienic. Before a girl leads her boy upstairs, she hands a fistful of milreis to the Madame, a ribald peasant from Provence, who grasps it swiftly, like a vulture.

President Vargas is taking the waters at Poços de Caldas, a spa in Minas Geraes. He is not expected back in Rio before May Day.

My days and nights are too full for chronology or report. The press is remarkably cordial. At my press conference, the reporters from all the papers frankly answered all my questions—and admitted in their articles that I had been the chief interviewer. Considering that the press in Brazil is muzzled and of low quality, the articles were full, fair and intelligent. The best interview was in *Diretrizes*, a liberal weekly illustrated journal with a larger circulation than *The New Republic*, that steers a dangerous course through the government's reactionary rapids. Its chief editor, Samuel Wainer, is a Jew; a noble and courageous Jew. *A Manhã* is the government sheet. To camouflage its slavery, it employs some of the best writers of the country and gives them complete literary freedom. The editor of this section is Ribeiro Couto, one of the private secretaries of Chancellor Oswaldo Aranha and the Brazilian intellectual who has done most to foster knowledge of other American literatures.

The President of the Associação Brasileira de Imprensa (the Press Association) is Roberto Moses, a different kind of Jew. Moses is a Catholic convert and an intimate of Vargas. He was one of the first to greet me; he is at home in all camps. There is in Moses something of the English tradesman who has made money, and of the prelates we read about in sixteenth-century Portugal and Spain, the converted Jews in charge of the Inquisition. He is

cordial, kind and ruthless. His Association is housed in one of the most modern and magnificent structures of Rio, the famous A.B.I.; like so many of the massive new official edifices, its mixed functionalism and self-assertion is confusing. Almost Roman. The Portuguese lived a great dream of Empire; Africa, America, India were its outposts. In more ways than through the sincere confessional of Rio's modern buildings, I feel the dream stirring in Brazil.

It was in the elegant lecture-hall of the A.B.I. that I talked, in Spanish, on "The War Beneath the War." My introducer was Couto; my sponsor the Brazilian-United States Institute. In the front row sat Gabriela Mistral.

My first lecture in Spanish in several years; and all I had was a few notes; I had not come to Rio prepared to lecture. To give myself assurance, I carried a dictionary with me on the platform, a small leather-bound tome that looks like a Bible. There were a few empty seats in the handsome auditorium, possibly because the newspapers had said that I would speak English. After the talk, a group of about twenty good men of Brazil take me to dinner in Copacabana. For two hours, they feed me half-cynical reports of how the suave dictatorship of Vargas works. Brazil is full of beginnings; Vargas plays the middle against them all. To change the metaphor: he fishes adroitly in troubled waters. These intellectuals, leading men of letters and the arts and science, some of them in government positions, make me think of the intellectuals of Russia, in 1900.

The most interesting journalist in Brazil is Assis Chateaubriand, with whom I dine one night, in the company of José Lins do Rego, foremost revolutionary novelist, and Antenor Chávez, a rich lawyer from Recife. I see Assis several times. In São Paulo, he has me christen a state airplane named "Christovão Colombo," and reads an address to me. He is a little, dynamic chap, with an Indian cast of countenance and cool eyes that counteract his explosive manner of speech. He owns a formidable chain of papers in every city of importance, and writes a daily editorial for them all. A man of shrewd scrutinies—and shrewd compromises.

After dinner, we are joined by the Minister of Labour, Marcondes Filho. This clever lawyer from São Paulo and ex-Integralista is the ultimate in cynicism. He takes his wet cigar from his mouth and says to me, in colloquial Portuguese:

"Stick around, brother, and you'll see, right here in Brazil, the *new world* in the making. While you liberals and radicals were talking about it."

The talk swings round to our Ambassador, Jefferson Caffery. Suddenly, the voice of Assis shows irritation and resentment.

"I get plenty of cards to pink teas, cocktails and state dinners at your Embassy. I have no time for that bilge. But *not once* has your Ambassador invited me to sit quietly down with him, for a real talk."

As I drive to the Itamaraty, the gracious old palace, now the Foreign Office, whose gardens stand in Rio's slums, I recapitulate what I feel about Brazil's political status; the premises of our political support (for war's sake) of our first South American ally. . . .

From 1920 to 1930, Brazil felt the same democratic upsurge that was manifest throughout the world. In many countries of Europe, these progressive forces put Labour and Social Democracy in power. In others, like Italy, before they could get there, they had collapsed through their inner superficiality; and reaction inherited the chaos. In Argentina, Brazil's powerful southern neighbour, these progressive forces for the first time had elected a radical president, Hipólito Irigoyen, true friend of the little man of the cities and the *chacras*, the small farms. In Brazil, the ferment could not go beyond aspiration, epitomized by the epic march of Prestes and his Column through the vast hinterlands of the country. Prestes at that time was a young colonel of the engineers, without political education: a mathematician, not a Marxist. His ragged troops brought hope to the half-starved *sertanejos*; and their pitiful state brought him to Marxist consciousness. But his march did not touch a single important urban centre. He remained in the hinterland; and Brazil's major population lives on or near the seacoast.

From the same state as Prestes, Rio Grande do Sul, rise two political adventurers: the cold, plump, spiderlike Getulio Vargas and Oswaldo Aranha, the brilliant gaucho. They capture the idealism of the Army (the revolutionary movement of the young officers in 1922 came to be known as *tenentismo*, and produced Prestes), the idealism of the intellectuals, and the faith of the miserable masses, exploited in town and country. In 1930, Vargas, by armed rebellion against the government of Washington Luiz, is president. Labour begins to organize. Also fascism, under the Integralista Greenshirts of Plinio Salgado. The democratic movement, on the other hand, is dominated by the Aliança Libertadora Nacional, whose most conspicuous leader, Prestes, has joined the Communist Party. Against this extreme left, Vargas, a convinced conservative who has never hidden his contempt for "bourgeois democracy," leans toward the Integralistas. In 1937, now a legally elected President, he declares his open sympathies for Franco and the fascists of Spain, and his respect for the "corporate state" of Salazar of Portugal; when war breaks, his admiration for the "new order," the "strong blood" of the Axis.

His term was to have ended in 1938. The democratic movement of Brazil, meantime, has shown the classic swift progress toward disintegration. In Argentina, already in 1930, Irigoyen is thrown out by a *junta* of Generals and big land-owners. In Europe and Asia, the process matures: Hitler has come to power and the insincere democracies, including our own, are helping him grow fat. Our metals, meantime, are building Japan's Navy. In the

forthcoming Presidential elections of December 1937, the confusion of Brazil's democracy is made manifest, by the appearance of *two* democratic candidates, by the refusal of Prestes' large group to support either one and by his failure (he has been studying Marxism in Moscow) to put forth a satisfactory substitute.

Vargas, through his Lieutenant, General Goes Monteiro, has published certain material, called "the Cohen documents" that "reveal" a communist plot. This is his pretext for declaring the country in a "state of siege." Parliament approves, and commits suicide. Vargas abolishes Parliament, suspends universal suffrage, sets up the *Estado Novo*. In 1938, the Integralistas rebel. Suavely, Vargas sends the Brazilian caudillo to Lisbon into exile. His new constitution is modelled after Italy's and Portugal's corporate system. The states are reduced to virtual provinces, as under the Empire. Instead of Governors chosen by the people, they now have Interventors, named by Vargas. They in turn name the municipal mayors. Labour is "nationalized," which means that the workers cannot strike and have their leaders chosen for them in Guanabara Palace.

A pretty picture. . . . Is it fascism?

Such are my thoughts as I pass through the charming patio of the Palace: swans swimming in the pool, palms fringing it, and the pure classic façade . . . for talks with the Chancellor, Oswaldo Aranha, and with his Impressive Under-Minister, Mauricio Nabuco.* Fascism is a new disease. Dictatorship is older than America Hispana. Under discussions of fascism, I suspect, as much muddlehead thinking has been concealed, as under discussions of communism or democracy. Delay judgment. Study the people.

The continuous luncheons, interviews, dinners: all of them are revealing; some of them I should report. For instance, I lunch with Nabuco and Paulo Bittencourt, proprietor of the staid *Correio da Manhã*, the most influential of Rio's papers. We sit in the English-looking bar of an uptown hotel; Nabuco has seen to it that there are no other guests in the room. Before lunch, there are cocktails and whiskies-and-soda. Then a huge carafe of black porter is set on the table. Bittencourt, handsome, slight, dull, smokes his British pipe as soon as he may. I have been in his mansion, gracious with modern art and wide doors opening on gardens. All his family speaks perfect English. Bittencourt does not disguise his passionate respect for the British Empire. Nabuco is a big, beefy aristocrat, whose integrity is unimpeached; whose devotions are Portugal's past and Brazil's future. His Teutonic build is a good case for the contention of Brazilian sociologists like Oliveira Vianna that the best of Portugal was Nordic, and that this best emigrated to Brazil. His house is the perfect, quiet exemplar of colonial Brazil; of the gentility which was quite sure of God's blessing on its

* Between my first and return visits to Brazil, Nabuco resigned.

slave foundations. (Nabuco's father, by the way, Joaquim Nabuco, Chancellor under Dom Pedro II, played perhaps the greatest role in the freeing of Brazil's last slaves.) Every word of Nabuco breathes confidence in Brazil's future.

"The difference between us and our Hispanic neighbours? The difference between Portugal, with its political genius, and Spain. . . . In North America, there is your country, dominant. In South America, there will be Brazil. . . ."

His remarks are full of similitudes between his country and the United States. I speak of the Brazilian sense of destiny. He follows that up; he likes the word.

Bittencourt is less certain. He attacks me savagely when I remark that the British Empire is doomed. I make a distinction between empire, and a commonwealth of English-speaking nations, captained inevitably by us. He refuses the distinction. Bittencourt does not like the idea of an English-speaking concert of peoples, captained by us.

"You Americans have a long way to go," he says, "before you prove yourselves the equals, in *anything*, of the British."

His manner seems to say: "You know very well, my dear man, that in grace, sensitivity, the arts of living, we Brazilians are already far ahead of you Yankees. Perhaps we'll prove our superiority, in the long run, in making a world power. Perhaps *we* are the heirs of the British."

I recall my unhappiness in Portugal: this remarkable little folk ruined itself, not as is commonly supposed, by spending its energies in world-conquest, but by emotionally and spiritually turning away from Spain toward England. Spain's brutal domineering forced this attitude. But to explain the cause is not to remove the effect. I see in Bittencourt and Nabuco two phases of one deep psychology. Unconsciously, do they regard the Brazilian folk of the vast north and west, the dark, inarticulate folk of the Amazons, of the sertões, of Mato Grosso and Goyaz, the folk in whom *I* see Brazil's potential greatness, as the British look on their colonials: human material for exploitation?

The greatest book in Brazil's literature, *Os Sertões*, is a study of the hinterland's dark and confused folk. The author, Euclides da Cunha, wrote with a deep pessimism; he was convinced that the mixture of bloods, European, African, Indian, had fructified in an inferior race, a race unequal to the stupendous challenge of Brazil's climate and geography and resources. Like the under-darkness in the skin of even the fairest Brazilian, one is likely to find in him—as in Da Cunha, a hidden sense of doom. Is this too a presence at our luncheon table, in the Anglophilism of Bittencourt, in the bumptious Brazilian confidence of Nabuco?

I am going to keep on asking questions; perhaps by the end of my journey, the poor ones will have evaporated, the good ones will have answered themselves. . . . My mind jumps to the workshop and

walls of Cândido Portinari, undisputed prince of living Brazilian painters. Cândido is a little man from the state of São Paulo, and he talks like his Italian peasant parents, whose deep portraits he has painted. A remarkable little man, about five feet high, with a triangle of tension between his eyes, his nose and his brow, that I have seen only in authentic men of genius. The mass of the head may be small; where this tension exists, it generates an atomic energy that is creative and tremendous. And the work of Portinari is tremendous. Except for Picasso, there lives no virtuoso of the brush that is his equal.

The evolution of Portinari in a way has been the contrary of Picasso, from whom he has taken so much, perhaps too much. The Spaniard from Málaga, securely rooted in his mature, articulate race, vaulted to Paris, created an "international" art whose Andalusian-Arabesque forms were not visible, except to the profoundest eye, before his *Guernica* period. Portinari, of a race still unformed and inarticulate, schooled in the "international" art of Paris, consciously seeks the roots of his people. And finds them, predominantly, in the contours, colours, rhythms, energy-forms of Brazil's Negro and mestizo! That Portinari is of Italian blood, with no drop of African, does not count. He and his art are Brazilian.*

Not all Brazilians agree with the Nabucos and Bittencourts, the pessimistic da Cunhas; certainly not with the Viannas, who are corrupted by Nazi racial doctrine. Men like Portinari, Couto, Vinicius de Moraes, Freyre (some as aristocratic as Nabuco) corroborate my vision of a Great Brazil whose symbols will be the two dark rivers: Amazon and São Francisco.†

I have cabled to Buenos Aires, postponed my coming a week. More I cannot do. And now, at last, I have a free day for Gabriela in Petropolis. She and Connie, her secretary, come down to Rio to fetch me. We climb up together on the old, stuffy Leopoldina railway, reminiscent of the last days of Brazil's empire when these carved-wood carriages, this piping little locomotive (both plated *Made in London*) must have been impressive.

* Not till later, when I knew the great North Brazilian state of Bahia, could I tell how true is this statement.

† The following are the official percentages of races according to Brazil's census of 1872 and 1890—the last which took cognizance of colour. It must not be forgotten that those listed as White include many cases of diluted, although not conspicuous, Negro or Indian blood.

Year	Whites %	Negro %	Indian %	Mixed %
1872	38.1	19.7	3.9	38.3
1890	44.0	14.6	9.0	32.4

This fundamental difference between the earlier settlers of the British North American colonies and those of Spain and Portugal must not be forgotten: the former came in the most part with their women; the latter came almost entirely without women.

Petropolis is a decayed imperial town, summer resort of Dom Pedro, overwhelmed and glorified by verdure. Green invades the streets, the crevices between the cobblestones; covers the water of the canals.

On the way to her house, Gabriela points out the pretty villa where Stefan Zweig and his young wife took their lives. I have never given much thought to Zweig, whom I did not know; nor to his work, of which I have read little. I have always put him in a class of writers who are not artists. Gabriela says I am wrong about Zweig. She names two of his books which she says are good: *Amok* and *Fouquet*. I do not know them.

Gabriela is sure their decision to die came suddenly. Only a few days before, they were discussing plans for the future.

"You came into them," she tells me. "They were excited when they heard you were coming; you were Frau Zweig's favourite American author. When I told them you were to spend two weeks with me, they insisted that I must share you with them. One week in my house, one in theirs."

Gabriela thinks they received a nocturnal visit from a Gestapo agent; that Zweig prophetically felt the approach of war to Brazil.

As I look out from the height of Gabriela's villa upon the immense luxuriant valley, down to distant Rio and the sea: the mountains and the vales and the vast rocks unfolding like the petals of a cosmic flower, I can reconstruct one possible cause for Zweig's death. Zweig was a sensitive man, and tired. Did he look upon this glory, and find it was *outside* him? find that fear and strain had exiled him, even as he looked, from what his eye and his mind held? I can imagine such a day coming to me; in which song, and the laughter and the touch of children, the loveliness of animals and flowers under the sun, no longer heal me. On such a day, let me die also.

There have been articles, of late, comparing me to Zweig, to Zweig's disadvantage. Because I still live and fight, and because he died. I reject this praise. Again I say that I know nothing of Zweig's life nor of his death. But when a man dies by his own hand, it is because he cannot live! And of this terror, we, the living, all of us, are guilty.

I spend my day's "vacation" at Gabriela's, writing my first Argentine lecture.

Monday, again in Rio, Minister Temístocles Graça Aranha comes to tell me that Brazil invites me to return; I shall go where I wish the map is open! And I shall give three more lectures: two in Rio one in São Paulo. We make tentative plans: Mato Grosso, Bahía Pernambuco, the Amazon and the Sertão. I tell Graça Aranha how deeply I wish to return. If my engagements and time permit. I shall let him know, before I leave Argentina.

Here's an archetypical day of Rio. . . .

Luncheon at the Jockey Club, given for me by Oswaldo Aranha. (I do not give a portrait of Aranha until all my impressions are recorded of an individual extraordinarily complex, revelatory of much of our day, of the disease of politics, and of Brazil.) I find myself at a huge round table, gay with flowers and bottles, wreathed round by about thirty men. They are leaders. The Old Foreign Minister, Afranio Mello Franco,* sensitive and exquisite and childlike; Lourival Fontes, commonly called the "Goebbels of Brazil," head of the D.I.P. (Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda); Moses, Bittencourt, Assis Chateaubriand for the Fourth Estate; pontiffs of law, literature, the arts, Brazilian history. I am at the right of Aranha; on my right an authority on Portuguese America. The food is good; the talk miscellaneous, neighbour to neighbour.

Aranha, I do not recall how, makes a courteous challenge of my inclusion of Brazil in a book called *America Hispana* or—vice versa—of my so entitling a book that includes Brazil. Suddenly, the talk is centred; Aranha is guiding it, and it is directed against me, from all around the table! Man after man challenges my naming Brazil part of *America Hispana*.

I quote Camoens in defence; Camoens is quoted against me. I prove that Hispania is the Latin word for the whole Peninsula; Rome's Lusitania is brought up. Law, philology, literature, are deployed, all under Aranha's invisible marshal's baton, to refute my use. The batteries are swift and consequent. Then, suddenly as it began, the firing ceases; the talk once again is miscellaneous, neighbour to neighbour.

I realize that Aranha has planned this ambush. Brazil, proud daughter of Portugal, does not like to share the name Hispania, which speaks too loud of Spain, and of Spain's frequent will that the whole peninsula be hers.†

Jorge de Lima calls for me to take me to his house for dinner. Jorge is a practicing physician, a practicing Catholic, a famous poet, and a Negro. In Rio, he is merely a sensitive, quiet, competent Brazilian. We are *en famille*, no other guests: I have wanted it so, after the strenuous mornings and afternoons and nights. Senhora de Lima, it appears, is a white woman; and Jorge's two children (one of whom gives me an extremely useful map) are as white as

* Senhor Mello Franco, dean of Brazilian statesmen, died in January, 1943.

† Three months later, I prepare a selection of the lectures delivered on this journey for Losada, my Buenos Aires publishers, who will make a book of them (published September, 1942, under the title "Ustedes y Nosotros"—which means: "You and We"). In 1930 I published a selection of lectures delivered on that journey, in Mexico, Cuba, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, etc., as *Primer Mensaje a la América Hispana*. This one, which likewise envisages all my brother-Americans of Spanish and Portuguese tongue, I subtitle *Nuevo Mensaje a Ibero-América*. I write a note to Oswaldo Aranha, conceding his victory in that courteous battle.

mine. The different-coloured skins, to all seeming, harmonize, as in a home of ours, different-coloured eyes or hair. Nothing unnatural in this happy, Christian family—unless thinking make it so.

Down from the city of São Paulo, Oswaldo de Andrade, noisy, backslapping, comes especially to see me: so he says, but I don't believe him. Andrade is the Bernard Shaw of Brazil, equally clever, equally shrewd, equally shallow; the carnivorous, cigar-smoking Shaw of a lush land. As Shaw a socialist, Andrade calls himself a communist; but unlike Prestes, he is not in prison. Instead, Andrade is rich. For in addition to being a novelist, a playwright, a pamphleteer, a communist, Andrade is a promoter doing a fat business in São Paulo. With his charming wife, who is the sister of the wife of his son, we drive out to São Christovão. I've been there before, on the lot where Orson Welles is shooting the Rio Carnaval scenes of his South American picture. Tonight, Welles has told me, there'll be an exceptionally good gathering of samba singers.

Welles' lot is what we'd call an estate: ample garden, houses, pavilion where at all hours refreshing drinks are served; and all lighted under the purple Rio sky to a glamour beyond any motion picture. The garden is full of citizens of Rio dressed up as citizens of Rio: nubile girls, women like nosegays, women like bombs, slick, dark gentlemen in plush tails. They are all painted for the camera; they are all ill-at-ease. They are *real* cariocas, but the camera won't know it, the camera won't tell it; their features, their gestures, are masks of nervousness and out-of-timeness.

Away from them all, in a dark corner under a huge ceiba tree, are gathered dark men and women. They wear the drab dress of workers; there is no touch of paint on them and no light. They huddle close: suddenly, they sing. When they begin, it is to sing away their strangeness in this fabulous place to which Welles has paid them a fabulous price to come. In a moment, the time, the place, the money, are forgotten. Song possesses them. As one song ends, another is born of the silence. Soon, the painted cariocas steal near, hang on the edge of the strong music, hungry. Welles is there too, the big playboy, cleansed of his own cheapness by a full prairie wind running through him. Welles is a huge co-ordinated baby, enormous in energy and animal spirits. He may go through the "works" of life, and come out a man (his nostalgia for the truths of Ibero-America speaks well for him); or he may play safe and remain a virtuoso. Humbly possessed, he also listens.

I could listen to Brazilian folk music forever. It is unfathomably beautiful and unfathomably profound. Upon its surfaces, it is honey-sweet, petal-soft, caressing the skin like the touch and scent of flowers. Within its depth, it is complex like organic life; and dark as tragedy. Beside it (I speak of the plentiful best) our popular music (jazz, swing, torch-song, chant of cowboy, ranger, pioneer)

is repulsive with its skin-nervous intricacies bristling about emptiness and inorganic softness. Beside it, even our best Negro spirituals reveal the false simplifying and diluting process of an alien culture upon the Negro. Brazilian folk music is not African or Negro; it is Brazilian. Its components, African, Indian and Portuguese, are organically fused like the elements in a living body.

And what a singing body! There are many folk, Brazilian musics; they range like the climates and the soils, like the solitudes and the *mucambos* and *favelas* of the cities, where the folk live in unspeakable poverty. To set down in critical prose the values of this music, the critic must be the poet, deep as the experience of the folk within this land where nature is at once fierce enemy and passionate lover; and where the masters also were brutal enemy and tender lover. Our winter is a child's-play opponent, compared to the hostile tropic heat of Brazil. (In the *sertão*, it alternates, when the sun goes, with cold; the rocks, swelling with heat, shrinking with frost every twelve hours, split; only spined life, like the *macambira*, the *mandacari* can flourish.) Our pioneers cleared the forest, cut the firewood, built the home and hearth: there was the winter enemy outside. Brazil's heat is not so easily defeated. It invades the home and overwhelms; it invades the soul and betrays. It is insects and disease; it is cloudburst and drouth; it is jungle green growing again overnight where it was cleared. It is passion-madness, frenzied act, long languor. Man can succumb to it, like the African in the Congo or the pitiful Indian savage on the Amazonian slopes of the Andes. Man can intricately escape it (another way of succumbing?) like the Hindu fakir. This music of Brazil promises a different kind of answer: confrontation, transfiguration.

The secret of this music's greatness (at its best): what places it in a higher class than all but a few folk musics of the world, is that it is pure of sentiment or sensuous tenderness: it is the verdant expression of an essential life-rhythm. It seems that the Brazilian folk man and woman have led so full an emotional life that they need not express these conscious elements in their music (the words are mere pretexts). The music, released of the familial and individual emotional demands for utterance, becomes pure æsthetic form.

Of course, I speak only of the best. When, as in the *choro carinhoso* (sob- or torch-song), the music becomes sentimental, it loses power. Slow first, it almost always returns to the *samba canção*, fast, hard, unsensuous and untender. *Macumba* recitative and *samba* texture can be as terribly essential as the throb of sex.

SÃO PAULO

Dominant on the hill, the city: huge, chaotic buildings, many of twenty stories. Below, the Braz, the low-lying industrial town: factories and homes of factory workers. The difference between the two "cities" is poignant. The central avenues of Braz are sordid,

crude, noisy, shoddy, like parts of Chicago, but with a softer energy which is the difference perhaps between our acerb prairie and the São Paulo tableland. Off the main street of Braz, between them and the factories, there are tender streets: humanly green—many with trees. Planless industrialism, here, is poor and superficial; Brazil's verdure wins, even in Braz.

As a product of capitalism, like all the towns of the era, from Toronto to Patagonia, São Paulo is a failure. But the squares, churches, humbler houses, especially the low, walled dwellings of the side streets, glow. Never dark like Rio; less ebullience than the Mediterranean population would suggest. Few Negroes in Braz. Braz is Brazilian.

In the bourgeois city, too. The new avenues crisscross with viaducts, pathways of palms, modern structures—a contrapuntal music of power, suffused (unlike our industrial towns: Cleveland, Pittsburgh) with light. At once, these imperial streets (Brazil's potential power is imperial) fall away into soft old streets, fragments of park, churches. In São Bento, Largo do Café, Rua Direita, where no vehicles are allowed of afternoons, the bourgeois throng. Directionless. Cut off from the workers, who are poor and spiritless, and also directionless at the moment: for they have lost the dignity of independence.

There is, I am told, much "intellectual and æsthetic" life in São Paulo. I will have none of it. I admit, I am prejudiced against this highbrow hegemony of South Brazil. In some prejudice, there is intuition. Anyway, since I admit I may be wrong. . . .*

MINAS GERAES

Of all the twenty states of Brazil, Minas Geraes is the most blessed, the most Brazilian. It "has everything." The map reveals its symbolic place. São Paulo which is temperate mountain and plateau; Rio de Janeiro which is coast, volcanic, tropic, dark; Espirito Santo which is a smaller Rio de Janeiro; Bahia which is Portugal, Africa, music, jungle and sertão; Goyaz which is bleaker desert and more terrible jungle; a tip of Mato Grosso—immensity of horizon, intensity of diamonds: these states, surrounding it wholly, form a matrix for the jewel of Minas Geraes.

No state's population is more uniformly fused into Brazilian. The 1890 census (the last which took note of races) gave Minas 30% predominantly white; 30% predominantly black; 6% Indian and 34% mixed. The mountains of Minas are the highest of the land, cool, and full of iron (fifteen billion tons of it, according to

* Of course, the state of São Paulo is "another story" and does not come into this prejudiced account. When coffee booms, the standard of living in the state is extremely high; according to T. Sousa Lobo (in his *São Paulo en a Federação*): "higher than that of forty-four of the forty-eight states of the North American Union."

fficial figures). The valleys of Minas are fertile; the grim and enormous sertão really begins only as we approach Bahia and Ioyaz. The state is under three hundred seventy-five thousand square miles in size; less than a third of Amazonas, less than half of Pará or Mato Grosso. Yet it has more cities and townships than any state of Brazil. In minerals, it is supreme: its manganese, its gold, its mountains of compact hematite with more than 65% iron. It is the centre of the country's steel mills. Yet, for all this industrial wealth, its farm and livestock products are even richer. In agriculture, it is second to São Paulo, the coffee mart of the world. In livestock, it is second to Rio Grande do Sul, the small pampa state larger than Uruguay). Cotton, coffee, rice, bananas, are among its products. Even a little rubber. A good deal of sugar; and manioc, tobacco, corn, among the best of the Republic.

In the beauty of its folk, it is bettered by no state and by no folk in the world. To Minas came the most beautiful of the Negro races: the *Jolofo*s, the *Sêrêres*—lovely as the Egyptians, the *Fulahs* and Ashantis, who were frequently more cultured and literate than their owners. And in its colonial towns: Ouro Preto, Congonhas do Campo, Sabará, etc., toiled a mulatto, the bastard son of a slave woman, a man named Antonio Francisco Lisboa, known as O Aleijadinho* because he was a leper, the work of whose rotted hands makes him, in my judgment, the greatest plastic artist of the hemisphere since the pre-conquest cultures of Mexico, Central America and the Andes.

The overripe, deep mountain towns, where O Aleijadinho made his statues and his churches, are all close to the state's modern capital, Belo Horizonte. The plane gets us there quite early in the morning. (On this journey, I am accompanied, in the post of secretary, by a young historian who works with Aranha in the Itamaraty: Sergio Correia da Costa, author of a biography of Dom Pedro II.) I leave him and the reporters at the hotel, and meet the modern city.

This is the first wholly modern town of Brazil that I have seen; it should teach me much about the functional capacity of the people. It is a good town, originally planned. The streets meet each other, not at rectangles, but diagonally, with periodic squares rising in palms and broad avenues, also palm-lined, catching the streets up into districts. The houses reveal more fantasy and audacity than taste. Many have that tropic exuberance in line and hue which is so painful in architecture. Some have dignity, a few beauty. Within this modern setting walk the folk, mild and suave, without the rigour of the north, the fluidity of São Paulo.

We visited several of the old towns: towns of iron, of gold, of Aleijadinho's glory; scaling by poor roads red with hematite the ancient mountains of ore. . . . One almost endless street, rising and

* *Aleijadinho* is the affectionate diminutive of *aleijado*; it means "the little maimed one."

falling with the undulant valley between the mountain walls. The folk here are slow again, silent, with an Indian fixity; remote from the middle class whose loud Latin demonstrativeness I remarked at the airports. As we entered a town, beyond a church of the sterile Dom João V style borrowed from Portugal, we saw a Bishop and his retinue of priests and monks trudge up the hill to a row of one-story dwellings. We pay him our respects. He is a swarthy, gentle, vigorous, sweet man, on a pastoral visit. He lives in two worlds, his diocese and the universal Church; and they go well together; there is room in them both for misery and sin, as for the joy of sure salvation. Half of the Bishop's followers are dark; the monks have black beards that overwhelm their bland eyes.

At the other end of town is an open hearth steel mill, with foundries, rolling-plant: all literally in the jungle. The furnaces stand without walls, so that the cooler air of outdoors perpetually plays, and the eyes of the puddlers lift from the incandescent metal to groves of palm, bamboo, live oak. How different from the open hearths of Pittsburgh, where the walls shut in the great heat, shut out the great cold of winter, and the arid, mean streets, always.

There is more Negro in these workers than in the north. From which I infer that the Indian temper of Belém is less telluric than I had thought, and more racial. Slow, relaxed, dignified, is their regular rhythm; capable of sudden accurate speed—like cats who move slow, pounce swift.* Across the road from the mill another shift of men is playing soccer. I go to watch them. They play slow, compared to the nervous swift football of the English; but very sure, weaving the ball intricately (like the melodic line of a *samba*) to the goal. From such players, doubtless, the teams were recruited that recently made Brazil the world's soccer champion.

On our way home, that night, among the iron mountains, and the stars a golden shawl upon Brazil's dark shoulders, we stop the car to give a woman a lift. She is pale and fleshless under her dark skin. Her husband ill, she has left Bello Horizonte at dawn to get wood. She speaks with gracious courtesy and the dignity of the

* Since writing the above, I find this corroborating passage in Euclides da Cunha. But the author is describing the *sertanejo*, the half-breed (Portuguese and Indian, with little African) of the hinterland of Bahia. What he describes, it would seem, is a national folk trait. Here are his words:

"He is the permanently tired man.

"This invincible indolence is reflected in his muscular atonicity, in his slow speech, inhibited gesture; in his leaden walk and the languid cadence of his *modinhas* (songs); in his constant proneness to immobility and silence. Nevertheless, this appearance of fatigue is a deception. Suddenly, surprisingly, it is gone. That run-down organism can be transfigured, straightens, revealing new lines, in stature and gesture; the head grows firm and erect on the strong shoulders, the eyes become intrepid and keen; like an instant nervous discharge, the habitual relaxation of his organs disappears. From the vulgar countenance of the sleazy countryman, then rises up the master-look of an aggressive Titan, unexpectedly strong, and agile."

humble: Christian and of the earth. This is my sense of my first days in Minas. Earth rules its folk—and the tenderness of Jesus.

Why is the difference so great between the exploited Negro of Brazil and the exploited Negro of the United States? Because the latter have known lust and greed of their masters; the former, lust and greed no less, but tenderness also.

This morning in Bello Horizonte, I go early (my common schedule in every town) to the market. And as I watch the Negro, almost as silent as the Indian, and the more ebullient, better-dressed, paler bourgeois, I meditate upon the art of Aleijadinho.

He was a dark, yellow man with a heavy head on his short thick body, and a delicate face. A bitter man. Bastard son of Dom Manoel Francisco da Costa Lisboa and an African slave called Isabel, he took the double curse of his race and his birth, bitterly. Before his youth, he had learned all that the architects and sculptors of eighteenth-century colonial Minas could teach him. Portuguese Brazil had had her original plastic splendour a century before in Bahía, Olinda, Pernambuco; it had died down; now the artist slavishly copied the rococo of Lisbon which in turn copied that of France. The young mulatto despised the current arts of his land and its leaders. He was an arrogant, successful artist.

God loved him with an especial love; therefore chastened him. At forty-five, God made him a leper. "His toes rotted and fell off; he could not walk, he had to crawl on his knees. Also his fingers, in long ruthless paralysis, decayed. And his eyelids became flame. His teeth fell out; his mouth was a hideous, forever gaping grimace. So sinister and fierce was his look that those who saw him in the streets fled in terror."

He was a successful artist, famed throughout rich Minas. He bought a slave, named Januario, to help him in his work. Januario, in horror at sight of his new master, tried to kill himself. Aleijadinho drew the knife from the slave's breast; healed him, taught him. Taught him to help and to love him.

Now began his great work. He tied the pincel to his rotted fingers and sculpted. He wore a huge felt hat to hide his face. All day he laboured under the tent that he set up within or without the church; and threw stones at those who pried; and under cover of the dark crawled home to his bed.

He was a passionate man; with a double passion of genius and the aphrodisiac airs of Brazil. He lived without woman. God loved him; cruelly, ruthlessly, put him to work. And with the pincel thonged to the rotted stump of his hand, with red eye flaming, he created the revelation of beauty in stone, in wood, in church, until he was 83, when they took his body from the tent and laid it in holy ground.*

* His years were 1730-1814. He was a contemporary and neighbour of Tiradentes, Brazil's precursor of the movement for independence.

Aleijadinho's sculptures, principally in Congonhas do Campo and Ouro Preto, are rebellion against the shallow art of the Metropolis, against the shallow masters of State and Church. From this rebellious base, as Dante from his *Inferno*, he constructs his aspirant world, his Mystery of acceptance. His Prophets are hard, seeing flames of men. The group of soldiers torturing Jesus in *Os Passos* of the Via Crucis are the crass, animal-sweet, flowering earth; and Jesus the tenderness of strength, earth's ultimate flower that transcends earth. His churches: São Francisco and Carmo in Ouro Preto, São Francisco in São João d'El Rei, are transfigurations of Portugal's melodious stone into a clumsier, earthier, more spiritual beauty. Again, from strength, tenderness; from intricate power, simple tenderness. All the work of this tragic man, like the work of his hard taskmaster, Jesus, is tenderness: the final power, the final magic.

I am to find it in the flesh, in Bello Horizonte. . . .

Alone, I wander through the town. The poor districts, high wings of the city, are clear white houses (not even stoves in them, but braziers) perched on the red earth. Gay, resilient children, sweetly passive women. The poorest Negroes are sweet. There is tenderness, here. In the north, less; the Indian element is not tender, nor the ruthless tropic.

On the main street, the young people turn and look at me; the papers have published unusually good likenesses. There is a wistful longing in their faces.

Tired, I stop in a café; soon I am talking with the men at the next table. They are a dentist, a journalist (three times in prison) and an artist. They speak openly and loudly of the want of freedom in Brazil. A book by a friend: *Christo, O Maior dos Anarchistas*, has just been suppressed. "The papers are putrid. . . ."

"In 1930, all Brazil believed in Getulio Vargas. In 1937, he showed his contempt for Brazil."

"Aren't you afraid," I whisper, "you may be overheard? The waiter—"

"—is with us," they laugh. The waiter smiles and refills our glasses.

"I don't yet understand your Vargas," I say. "In 1930, he seems to be a man—an instinctive man—of the people. In 1934, he gets behind a constitution that is almost Christian socialist. Tears it up in 1937, in favour of a constitution that is almost fascist."

"He's a great politician. He has contempt for man."

"You had a great politician, once, who had love for man," says the journalist. "Lincoln."

"It happens once or twice in a century. Lenin—" I remind them.

We are friends now; we wander to another café. This one is in

a cellar with red plaid cloths on the tables. "The music is good," they tell me, but I scarcely hear them. All my eyes are upon a little waitress.

"Que maravilha!" I say.

She is not our waitress, another girl brings us our drinks. But the one in my eyes seems, across the noise of the large room, to hear me. She turns and smiles. Of course, she had not heard; my message reached her by another channel.

She is a girl of eighteen, in a cheap terra-cotta frock; a mulatto with some Indian blood heightening her skin to luminous honey. Her heavy hair is black; her features strong and perfect; her lips not too heavy. The whole face, gay with vitality and beauty, is matriced in sadness.

When at last I reach my hotel for dinner, I am full of the revelation of this girl. I tell Sergio about her. After coffee, with Doctor Texeira and a journalist, we go to the café with the red plaid tables. The girl is still there; busy at the end of the smoke-filled room. She feels our entrance, and smiles.

And now, a strange event: where but in Brazil could it happen? The whole café seems to know my interest, and to take part in it: indulgent, affectionate part. The girl knows, too. She comes and sits with us, at our table. She tells me her name: Ifigenia Silva. She lives alone with her mother. And do I know Robert Taylor? She smiles, and I smile. There is nothing to do—it is as if the whole café were waiting—but to tell her how beautiful I find her. I have lapsed, or risen, into poetry: I find myself saying in precise terms the beauty I find in her face; and precision is poetry. My friends help me out, translating my Spanish precisions into Portuguese. She enjoys this; accepts with dignity and playfulness.

The attention of the café is naïve, brotherly, discreet. When they realize that Ifigenia and I are friends, that nature is taking its good course, the men return to their own talk; no eyes touch us. Ifigenia works until eleven. She agrees, at that hour, to meet me outside the café. With the same natural ease, as if naught unusual had happened, she leaves our table for her duties.

At a few minutes of eleven, near the door of the café, I watch the men and women crowd the avenue; move through the fresh evening, part of it, all their lives part of it, and I part of them and of the Brazilian night. A man comes out, looks around, comes up to me. I recall him vaguely, behind the bar of the café.

"Ifigenia's cousin came for her," he tells me. "Her mother is sick. Ifigenia had to hurry home."

Tomorrow, at noon, we are flying back to Rio. The day after is May Day. Vargas will return from Pozos de Caldas in time for the great labour demonstration; and I have been invited to his box at the Stadium. I shall never see Ifigenia again! I walk to the hotel, still sharing the night, still sharing the leisured, ripe life of the men

and women who move within it, stir and substance of it. And now, not pleasure is the signature of my awareness; but sorrow.

In the morning I awake thinking of Ifigenia. Is it all a lie: the cousin and the mother? Is Ifigenia a mere harlot, like so many waitresses of so many cafés? And did she find some other man, after I left, and go with him? I do not believe it. The joyous beauty of the girl could lie and play a game; not the sorrow mothering it. Nevertheless, I am not sure. I find it is important to be sure.

I go to the café, learn Ifigenia's address. (The plane leaves at noon.) I get a car, drive through her street: one of the poor ones, clear and bare. Having seen the house she lives in, I tell the driver to stop in the next street on the corner. He is to walk back, to ask for Ifigenia, and tell her I am waiting in the car to say good-bye. He is to bring her.

The chauffeur is absent a long time; really a mere quarter hour. Then I see him, with the girl. She wears the same terra-cotta frock, and carries a bundle.

She steps into the car and gives me her hand with the same ease as last night when we agreed to meet. The bundle, she explains, is her mother's cakes, fresh from the oven. She must leave them at the café where she works.

"Your mother is better, then, if she baked the cakes?"

"I baked them."

"Then why do you call them your mother's cakes, not yours?"

Her eyes do not understand. She says: "They are my mother's cakes."

I smell their moist, pungent freshness in the newspaper wrapping, as we drive through the morning, pungent, too, and not unlike the cakes. Ifigenia's hand in mine is part of the symphony: morning and good things to eat within a mothering sorrow.

We drive to a small detached villa, just outside town, where the red earth flourishes in verdure. We pass through a creaking gate and a door opened by a woman with good eyes. She is a frowsy woman in a not too clean *peignoir*; and she takes money for her rooms from men who come with girls. She has good eyes; I would trust her.

We sit, the three of us, at the table where she has been having her late breakfast. The soiled dishes are still there. She brings fresh little cups, and we drink coffee. I look at Ifigenia. She is at ease, as always. And her beauty is so ineffably sad that all my thoughts are tears. Sorrow has mothered this loveliness of the slim flank, of the sudden breast, of the face . . . honey and fire: her impeccable harmony is joy, is playful youth, and her destiny is sorrow.

Three races suffer in her beauty: two of them—Negro and Indian—exploited, and the third, the master race, even more terribly exploited by its will to master.

All my sense toward the girl, all my need, is tenderness, whose great need is understanding.

The door is open into the bedroom, made fresh for us. But I know I shall make no move. I shall sit here, letting my eyes take, and my eyes bestow, in silence.

Then, in the silence (the woman of the good eyes has left us), Ifigenia's eyes are in mine. She gets up, and walks into the bedroom.

MAY DAY IN RIO

Huge crowds fight, all in good humour, to get in the Stadium. Once in, their energy subsides. The Box of Honour holds the entire Cabinet and its ladies; an Archbishop; assorted high officers of the Army. Only Oswaldo Aranha is absent, and is not expected; the President will be here any minute.

Awaiting him, I look at the crowd, spread out under the sun; as big as a Sunday ball game at the Polo Grounds, but having a far less good time. They sit with strange passivity, while the band plays martial music. Are they impressed by the impending presence of Getulio? or do they . . . intuitive folk . . . feel something amiss?

Lourival Fontes, head of the Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda,* leans over and whispers to me: the President's car on its way to the Stadium has had an accident. He is coming, but will be delayed.

I look at the occupants of the loge. A less prepossessing group of men I have seen seldom. Dutra, Minister of War, Vargas' Right, frequently outbalancing Aranha, Vargas' Left. Goes Monteiro, Chief of Staff, Capenema, Minister of Education, a weak, good face: and in that combination, in our world, the weak always wins. Ashamed and afraid of his own liberal impulses, Capanema rushes into the arms of the reactionaries, delivering up the schools. Beside Lourival Fontes, crooked of face, sits his wife, Adelgisa Néry, a poetress of renown. The Archbishop is a fat mulatto with a face extraordinarily bland and gently cruel; the kind of face that could utter benedictions before abominations—and doubtless has, many times. The Minister of Agriculture, Apollonio Sales, is a better sort; a dynamic young man whose homely face, earnest and eager, speaks hope. Perhaps, if he stays in politics, he'll lose it. Salgado Filho, Minister of Aviation, is also here; and my old acquaintance, Marcondes Filho, Minister of Labour, who has been at such pains to show me that the days of those old mossbacks, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Jefferson, Marx, et al., are over. "*We* are doing the job."

What is the meaning of such rulers against the background of so deep and beautiful a folk as Brazil's? They mean that this folk has no political expression, that it is incapable as yet of articulating its organic will or quality through political leaders. A vacuum exists between the folk and the realm of political-economic action;

* In July, Fontes was removed from office, together with Major Felinto Muller, the fascist Chief of Police of Rio.

and in this limbo the human animals who will pay for power fight it out among themselves: with the advantage to the shrewd, the unscrupulous, the readiest purveyors of a semblance of "order." These men in the Presidential box are not accidents. They are, indeed, a universal type, produced into power by any people who, because of the complexity and immaturity of its forces, expresses, politically, not its wisdom but its impotence.

Getulio Vargas does not arrive. Lourival Fontes leans to me again and whispers that he has been hurt; but not seriously Marcondes gets on his feet and reads the President's address, while the huge crowd uncomfortably stirs. Then the procession begins. A more depressing spectacle I have seldom seen. Groups of workers of all kinds pass round the great arena, and before the Presidential box dip their banners, which carry portraits of Vargas or printed statements of their personal devotion to Vargas. They hold up the fluttering canvases, as if they were too heavy for their arms.

I find myself recalling another Labour procession. It was in Mexico, in Torreón, several years ago. The peasants of La Laguna, recently made the owners of their land on which they and their fathers, immemorably, had toiled as peons, virtual serfs, defiled before their beloved chief, Lázaro Cárdenas. The President stood motionless as they passed; and I, who was at his side, could see the tears in his eyes. These men carried no flattering banners. They ran their new-brought trucks and tractors, proudly. And as they saw the man who had given them back their beloved earth, they lifted their faces up to him . . . the taciturn Indians . . . and cheered him.

I thought: these men of Mexico, too, had their long, tragic eras of silence and impotence. Political competence is not magic. It can be learned. . . .

CHAPTER II

ARGENTINE CAMPAIGN

The Nation and the People — Arrival in Buenos Aires — The Province of Buenos Aires — North Tour — Argentina of the Incas

THE NATION AND THE PEOPLE

In some respects, important ones, I know what I am getting into, as our plane swims the summits of Serro do Mar, skirting São Paulo, Serro Geral of Rio Grande do Sul, the beneficent sea wall which kept this southern land from invasion, long the curse of North Brazil; which brings rains all year to the interior and tilts the rivers westward, beckoning the settler; and as we halt at Porto Alegre (cold,

this middle May, last month in autumn); fly low over the lovely undulance of Uruguay, over the pampa of water . . . a hundred miles across . . . the Río de la Plata, and at last the pampa city, Buenos Aires.

I have kept in close touch, the years since my last visit, with Argentina; with its politics and economics, and its cultural life, which is the most sensitized and mature of South America:—with Mexico, of all America.

Argentina is a peculiar nation. Nobody likes it. Not the United States. Not Brazil. Not a single Spanish-speaking sister-nation! From Mexico to Uruguay and Chile, they like one another warmly. And warmly dislike the Argentines, calling them "superficial," "worldly," "arrogant," "conceited." Recently I find the Argentines do not like themselves. When I first knew them in the 1920's they were too fond of themselves; they have swung to the other equally unjust extreme.

Well, I like Argentina, I love the Argentines. Perhaps because it has been possible for me to understand them. Potentially they are one of the most remarkable peoples of the earth: remarkable in the originality of their intelligence and temperament; remarkable, too, in their faults.

Brazil is original in its universality. It is and has . . . potentially . . . everything. Irrigate its sertão, drain its jungle, introduce air-cooling on the scale of air-heating in the United States, and it could comfortably support a population of nine hundred million. Argentina is original in that it is peculiar. Egypt was peculiar; being a single luxuriant valley in a desert. Greece was peculiar; being a complex of myriad tiny ports and mountain valleys. Judea was peculiar; being a strip of highway on the road of mightier empires: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Rome. Argentina's peculiarity is the pampa.

Yes, I know: only half of Argentina is, literally, pampa. Patagonia, except in its northern reaches, is undulant waste; the west and north are mountain walls. But Argentina of the Argentines—of at least eighty per cent of its fourteen million people, live on the pampa. From the sugar fields of Tucumán south to Sante Fé and the entire huge Province of Buenos Aires, the land is pampa. Mendoza, under the abrupt west wall of the Andes, is pampa; and all the middle provinces to the Atlantic. The mountains of Jujuy and Salta terminate in pampa. The huge north rivers, as they move south, become pampas of water. Pampa and the earth-bearing Río de la Plata are related. Even the inferno-esque chill lands of the south move northward, as the great north rivers southward, pampa-bound and eventually pampa.

And what is pampa? It is flat land: not approximately flat like the prairies, like the steppes and llanos, but land absolutely geodesically flat like the surface of a globe in a schoolroom. Victoria Ocampo, daughter of the pampa, says: "When you stand in pampa,

there is no middle ground. Everything is close at hand—or on the horizon." It is land so vast in its monotony, so undifferentiated in its forms, that it ceases to be, like other land, material you can work with; it becomes a mood, at last a spirit, which invades you. In different kinds of people, it produces different actions. For instance, the writer . . . every writer . . . keeps on trying to describe it. (Which is a way of conquering it.) When I wrote *America Hispana* in 1931, I tried to portray the pampa. My effort was much praised. When I returned to it three years later, what I had written seemed to me all wrong. Other lands are taken for granted by their poets; or a part . . . a valley, a range of hills . . . is romantically described. Pampa cannot be divided; which means that emotionally, intellectually, it has never been conquered.

I could go on forever telling what the pampa is *not*. It is an emptiness that becomes filled with *you*; it is an infinitude that becomes infused with *you*. And *you* come back within yourself, tinged with this emptiness and this infinitude; your thoughts, your deeds, are invaded by this essence, inhuman, telluric, *yourself*. This becomes your eyes, looking out on pampa; invaded by pampa. And the dialectic can go on forever.

It takes amazingly contradictory forms. A tree in the pampa, where no tree grows except the ombú and tala, is an event distinct from a tree on a normal plain. You can plant groves, forests of trees (as the big estancieros did). Well, the groves flourish and are part of the pampa. You can build cities on the pampa: cities with millions of inhabitants, like Buenos Aires. The pampa will be inside the streets; inside the nerves of the citizens; inside the novels written about them. The eyes of the women born in Buenos Aires have the pampa in them; even if their parents were born in Italy or Poland. The elements of the *tango* are African, Brazilian and cheap modern Italian. Nothing pampa about that. The true tango is danced in crowded cafés, in cigarette smoke and sweat and cheap perfume. It is entirely city-made. It is entirely pampa. On Corrientes, the Broadway of Buenos Aires, the restaurants serve dishes whose recipes are from Milan and Naples. Their subtle savour is pampa.

Now anyone who has seen Egypt knows that the Nile, the yearly overflowing river between the deserts, was a factor in the deeply original world experience and vision of the Egyptian people. I do not say the Nile explains Egyptian religion and art. That would be nonsense: life in its universal and its particular forms is always inexplicable by any specific cause. I say: the geography of Egypt *conditioned* the forming of the culture of Egypt. I say the same of Palestine: its abrupt heights from which poignant vistas of varied country . . . valley, river, desert, garden, mountain . . . were revealed, entered into the peculiar Hebrew genius for universal vistas in the domain of spirit. And I say the same of Greece, whose myriad harbours close to myriad valleys encouraged exchange—of goods, then of ideas; and also encouraged anarchy and confusion.

It is absurd to claim such striking peculiarity for every part or people of the globe. I claim it for Argentina (not, of course, to the exclusion of other parts of Ibero-America).

The pampa is a dissolving and a transforming agent, so subtle, so universal, that it will make of its folk a truly individual expression of human spirit: a true culture; or it will dilute them into nothing. Time is the tragic dimension. In this alternative before Argentina, time is of the essence. (It is because I feel this, as do my Argentine friends, that I am hurrying south.) The Nile is the same now as when it collaborated to create Egypt's religion and art; it does not move the present-day Felaheen. Palestine has not inspired the Arabs as it did, ages ago, the eager young Hebrews. The descendants of the Maya, unconscious among the ruins of a supreme art that was conditioned by their jungle, are not impelled to create architectural order, as were their ancestors, within this jungle. If one element in the creating of a personal culture is the personal land, another is the specific nubile moment in the life of the people.

I review swiftly some of the essential traits of Argentina. The country was settled by the same classes of Spaniard, brutal, lustful, inspired, who followed Cortes to Mexico, Pizarro to Peru, Valdivia to Chile. They came in from the new metropolis, Lima, over the Andes of what is now Bolivia past Paraguay, over the Chaco jungles, down the great rivers; bearing toward Spain the gold and the silver that gave its name to the Rio de la Plata and to Argentina. Or they sailed in from the Atlantic; and, finding no silver, spread over the pampa. Rapidly, the pampa freedom dissolved their hispanicity, released their dynamic Spanish energy into new forms. They became distinct in temperament and taste from their brothers: from lordly and traditional Peru; from conservative, staid Chile; from tragic Paraguay and Mexico. They were fluid; they were radical; they were indifferent to the Church; they loved rebellion and freedom. Also, they were brilliant.

Spain's genius has always been vertical: depth of passion, height of will, acceptance of the tragic and mystic, rather than adjustment to earth. In Mexico and Peru, this trait wedded with the vertical genius of the native cultures and of the native mountains. The Argentine was horizontal; consonant with earth. But his earth was a broad, infinite land of huge horizons whose uniformity of space turned it into a mood, an exquisite meditation.

In the wars for freedom against Spain, the Argentines produced San Martín, who was a realist and a secular saint; the antithesis of the mountainous Bolívar, romantic, mystical and lusty. They produced, also, the first great school of democratic and socialist theory in America Hispana; another horizontal application of the spirit. They produced, with the Uruguayans, the gaucho who lived democracy; the gaucho dictator, Rosas, who betrayed it.

In the changing modern world, cattle and wheat became wealth greater than gold. The Argentine settled down; the landlords on

their estates immense as kingdoms stiffened against the gaucho who raised their cattle. The landlords centred in the city, together with all the middle men and middle women. This was a first moment of contraction from the pampa's fluid freedom.

From it came a great poem, *Martín Fierro*: the gaucho epic, whose equal in quality one can find only in the dawn poems of Europe, the *Poema del Cid*, the *Parzival* of Wolfram von Eschenbach. *Martín Fierro* has the dynamism of the Spaniard, but not expressed in classic vertical Hispanic form. Its fluid strength is closer to the pre-Spanish *romance*; it is the pampa and the pampa Indian in rebellion against the new hardening of property in Argentina, the shut land, the shut town, the shut horizon of law.

Contemporary with José Hernández, the poet of *Martín Fierro*—about the middle of the nineteenth century, rose in Argentina a new group of powerful minds who were men of action. The greatest of them was Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, the one intellectual of the first class, since Jefferson, to become President of an American republic. Sarmiento was a schoolmaster and a great prose writer. With Spanish passion and utterly non-Spanish will, he strove to build a fence about the pampa: a genuine, popular civic order. With him and others, like Bartolomé Mitre (soldier, historian and also President), Argentina became a true constitutional republic whose dominant economic class, the *estancieros*, practised a kind of Christian democracy with their workers.

Meantime the pampa's stupendous wealth pouring through the port of Buenos Aires, had turned a big village . . . *la gran aldea* . . . into a metropolis. The *estanciero*, ruling the pampa, gave the city its spirit. The pampa was there. And one trait of the pampa is longing. In the gaucho it had been for a wild, indeterminate freedom. Now, in Buenos Aires, it grew conscious, became nostalgia. The sons and daughters of the pampa, in their leisured wealth, looked about them and found themselves alone; alone at the very end of the earth! Summers they travelled three hundred miles through the soft, subtle, infinite pampa to Mar del Plata; and looked eastward out upon a sea which touched almost no land around the globe. Their nostalgia also was senuous, like the pampa. They longed for the arts, the play of the mind. Not upon Spain, which the pampa had dissolved in them, their nostalgia focused upon Paris.

Came the culminant hour of old Argentina: when the dynamic potency of the race, wedded to the pampa soil, fed and transfigured by it, produced an aristocratic republic: a generation of exquisite men and women, whose religion was secular, whose wealth was of the pampa, and enough of it to give plenty to the humblest servant; and whose spirit was of the pampa: free, generous, limitless, yet earthbound and sensitized to the ineffable pampa beauty.

The hour could not endure; its very virtues doomed it. Immigrants poured into opulent Argentina, where three or four millions enjoyed the fat of a land more than a third as large as the United

States. New, crude towns, like Rosario and Bahia Blanca, swelled with the influx, predominantly Italian, and with the fast-moving traffic of wheat, flax, linseed, beef and wool. But on the generous soil there was a new class of small and tenant farmers, hating the big estates. In the towns there were now exploited workers who read the great words of Argentina's democrats and conjugated them with Marx. In the north, in the rich sugar land of Tucumán, and in the drouth-burdened farms of Catamarca, Rioja, Santiago del Estero, there were for the first time toilers, impoverished and diseased, like the *rotos* of Chile, the *sertanejos* of Brazil, the peons of old Mexico. And in the Patagonian oil fields there were regimented workers, not allowed to organize, discouraged to think.

In 1916 these groups, allied with the small tradesmen and the intellectuals of the towns, abandoned the aristocrats whose "democratic" rule no longer worked; and elected a president, Hipólito Irigoyen. Six years later one of the aristocrats themselves, Alvear, succeeded under Irigoyen's party. In 1928 Irigoyen . . . now an old man . . . came back for a second term.

Irigoyen had the usual social-democratic armoury of half-measures. He opened new lands to the immigrants, he nationalized the virgin oil under the ground, he increased taxes. He had, to help him, the usual bureaucrats, hungry and corrupt. Also he had graciousness and love; and that hunger for ideas and the pursuit of them which the pampa breeds even in its illiterate gauchos. This helped to make him a delightful companion to a visiting Yankee; it scarcely helped to solve his country's darkening problems. The land-owners bided their time. Now again they showed themselves to be of Spain. With nothing of the political genius of the Anglo-Saxon, whose essence is compromise and adjustment, they looked to the army and prepared to strike.

Meanwhile, Buenos Aires had swollen until its metropolitan area comprised nearly a third of the country's population! It was as if the district of New York, including the towns across the Hudson, numbered forty million! This immense parasite lived well upon the body of the land it ignored. The whole process of the Republic: administration, communication, distribution and consumption, was monopolized by the city. The pampa had long since dissolved the original Spanish dynamism of the settlers. The immigrants, of alien cultures, completed the dissolving process. These people were sensitized, intelligent; but they lacked organic means for action. The old aristocratic forms of Argentine democracy were gone; no new ones had been devised, beyond the clumsy methods of voting at the polls. In 1930, with distressful ease, the land-owners and the army threw out Irigoyen and his majority party. Once in the saddle, they sophisticated the elections; and they have held the power.

These descendants of the men who made the land are very far from their fathers, who called democracy the dignity of Argentina. They are soft-bodied, hard-headed, shrewd and suavely desperate

men. They know the alternatives today are true democracy, which would throw them in the discard, and fascism. Like their cousins, the Señoritos of Spain who plotted with the Germans and Italians under Franco, they have made their choice. But they still must cling to the democratic lingo. They are too weak; the folk spirit of Argentina, although confused and blinded, is too strong to permit them to discard it.

What do I know of this folk's present spirit? Their current literature, rich in the perception of tragedy, of Argentina's promise and failure, reveals confusion. During the years just before the new outbreak of war, there has been a dismaying round of suicides among the country's leading writers. Leopoldo Lugones, most brilliant perhaps of the continent's poets, a person of integrity as well as power, breaks with the democratic dream of his long career; prophecies: "Now, for man's good, sounds the hour of the sword"—and takes his life. Horacio Quiroga, born in Uruguay but for two decades Argentina's most original short-story writer, takes his life. Alfonsina Storni, Argentina's most famous poetess, takes her life. There are subtler resignations. Samuel Glusberg, the son of East European Jews, who as publisher, editor, critic, has bravely poised the power of Argentine letters and confirmed it within the symphony of Hispano-American and Hemisphere expression, breaks off his young, responsible career in Buenos Aires, exiles himself to comparative idleness in Chile. Not all, of course, go these ways, bitter or sad. But the best who carry on bear a burden of dismay. Jorge Luis Borges, his generation's finest stylist, brazenly devotes his genius to a literature of fantasy and utter escape—incidentally lifting the detective story to a new height of literary excellence. Eduardo Mallea, a far deeper man, in his *Historia de Una Pasión Argentina* reveals his sense—profound and potent—of Argentina's destiny; and his long story of Porteño life, *La Bahía del Silencio* . . . a novel whose very touch and sound is like the city . . . shows the dissolvent pampa in the nullity, the white boredom of its characters: wraiths of a spiritual, actionless limbo. The brave and generous poet, Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, sets aside the lyre for the scalpel; and in his *Radiografía de la Pampa*, excoriates the moral bankruptcy of his people.

On the political plane, of course, all the sensitive, however dismayed, show their true compass. They fight and plead for Spain's Republic against their own government, whose sympathies are with Franco. Long before war breaks again on Europe, they open the pages of even their purely literary journals to their detestation of Hitler and all his myriad henchmen, avowed and secret; and to the defence of a new world consecrated, however blunderingly, by France, Britain, the United States and Russia. And as the disaster blacks out all the capitals and the Shadow nears, they stand in their remote, nostalgic Argentina.

ARRIVAL IN BUENOS AIRES

Among the new faces at the airport, my old friends. María Rosa Oliver, most valiant of all; child of the land-owning class, whose whole life is given, not sentimentally, not with "humanitarianism," but with hard and sensitive judgment, to our New World. Victoria Ocampo, no less tried in her way; and her even more intelligent but less dynamic sister, Angelica Ocampo. Eduardo Mallea, taciturn, hidden as ever. The burly Pablo Rojas Paz of *Crítica*, that vulgar evening paper (the most widely read of the whole continent) which has always been a friend of the good causes, and my faithful ally. Tota Cuevas de Vera . . . and many others. When the photographers have had their way with me, I put off the reporters. My few casual words of course don't satisfy them; the press conference is set for an hour and a half later. That will give me time to confer first with my advisers and to show them the press statement I have prepared on the plane.

The problem of how to win, and hold when I have won, a position where I can speak out, and of how to say what I have come to say, has occupied me since I left New York. I considered asking Mallea or Reissig to meet me, for this purpose, in Rio. I decided against it, feeling that my actual touch, when I arrived, would guide me best. Mallea, John Griffiths of our Embassy, Luis Reissig, head of the Colegio Libre de Estudios Superiores, and myself, get in a car and confer on the long ride from the airport to town through the endless monotonous suburbs.

The new face is that of Reissig. The universities of Argentina have suffered from the confusion of the folk. Many of their leaders are strong men of the left. Many have welched into reaction. Coriolano Alberini, for instance, the man who, as Dean of the Faculty of Letters of Buenos Aires in 1929, was instrumental in bringing me south and introduced me at the University, is now reputed to be pro-nazi. The Buenos Aires Law School is said to be a hotbed of reaction. On the other hand, the Medical School is militantly democratic. The same confusion in the provincial universities. La Plata, Santa Fe and Tucumán are democratic; the University of Cuyo in Mendoza—under the shadow of the Andes where San Martín trained his great army—is a home of reaction. Conflict has made for intellectual impotence; and Reissig stepped into the breach. His Colegio Libre, starting in Buenos Aires, has branches in all the principal Argentine cities. Eight brief years have made it a strong centre, challenging the universities in leadership. Reissig, collateral descendant of the great Uruguayan poet, Herrera y Reissig, is a little man with the look of a medieval monk of Castile. His face is mildly, subtly harmonious; his deep, generous eyes are of a larger scale. In sixteenth-century Spain, he would have headed a monastery and run it well. Here in modern Buenos Aires, his passion is secular, horizontal, radical—and cautious.

We discuss Argentina's state of siege and its effect on my mission. The newspapers cannot criticize the government's foreign policy; cannot directly express love or hate for the belligerents, or even name them adversely. Political meetings are barred. Lectures must be non-political, or risk the ban. Censorship is retroactive. Any paper can print anything; but next day may find itself suspended. And actually, the streets of Buenos Aires and of the provincial towns are clamorous with newsprints whose pro-democracy or pro-fascism is patent in the headlines. There is a spawn of little nazi and nationalist papers.

The important metropolitan press, in varying degrees, is with us. *La Prensa*, greatest of the morning papers, is conservative, anti-Administration, staunchly pro-Ally. *La Nación*, the famous journal founded by Mitre, is conservative and a little less staunchly pro-democratic. *El Mundo*, the big morning tabloid, is a hundred per cent pro-American and pro-British. These are the leaders in the morning press—although there are at least ten smaller rivals. In the afternoon field, of the three leaders, *Crítica* and *Noticias Gráficas* are with us; *La Razón* is cautiously neutral. Without editorial opinion, all these papers find no difficulty in making every column of their news show where they stand. The problem, then, is not insoluble.

As I see it, my first step is to secure my position; win my public. My first statement to the Argentine press, therefore, says:

"I have come here to learn. I have not come here on a new mission. I have come here to continue my *old* mission of many years, in America Hispania. That mission, as you know, consists of trying to understand Argentina; and of telling the truth about my own country, about Argentina, about the world. It means, as I see it, ignoring frontiers: on the premise that no man of an American Republic is a foreigner in any American Republic. The world, and America, are in crisis today. This is scarcely the moment to stop seeking the truth—or to stop telling the truth."

There are not my exact words. They're the essence. Reissig, Griffiths (a good man, the antithesis of the one who met me from our Embassy in Rio) and Mallea, are all agreed that I should appear to expect no trouble, therefore court no trouble.

I suppose no one has ever had a "better press." The causes are multiple. There is my intrinsic place in the heart and mind of Argentina. Also there is the motive already alluded to: the papers—and the illustrated weeklies, not forgetting the radio—are employing me as a safe and eloquent means of keeping before the public the cause which everybody knows I stand for, which the press cannot advocate directly, and which is, evidently, dear to the public. I am a symbol.

Any sign from the government to make me welcome is conspicuous by its absence.

My first public appearance (if I expect a little informal radio salute to Argentina and, of course, the interviews) is to be at the dinner of the Sociedad Argentina de Escritores. Comfort and amenity have been sacrificed to admit the large crowd. (Are there that many writers in Buenos Aires?) The tables are placed end to end in long rows; the anteroom and hall are full of tables; even so, several hundred guests stand where they can listen, if not dine. At the speakers' table presides Eduardo Mallea, the President. At his left is Carlos Saavedra Lamas, former Foreign Minister, now Rector of the University of Buenos Aires. At my right is Alfredo Palacios, Socialist Senator and President of the University of La Plata. Others are Martínez Estrada, Victoria Ocampo, Alberto Gerchunoff, veteran democrat and editorial writer of *La Nación*. The scheduled talks are Mallea's and mine, with the reading of a poem by Martínez Estrada. Mallea's speech is a long, densely composed essay which I must strain to follow but which profoundly moves me. It is a magnificent pedestal for me, on which to read my carefully weighed words. When I sit down, the public is aroused. It has no intention of leaving. Saavedra Lamas gets up and improvises before the microphone.

This gentleman of the old school—winner, some years back, of the Nobel Prize for Peace—looks like a lamb; and I have always felt that his intelligence, like his temperament, was lamblike. Now, from this woolly countenance comes words of fire! He has begun with praise of me, whom he calls “a creative diplomat.” He goes on to praise my country and our cause, which he identifies with Argentina's; and to excoriate the foreign policy of his government, run by the men of his own party. He sits down before an electrified silence. The public has not expected passion and revelation from the cautious Saavedra Lamas.

Alfredo Palacios rises and the crowd licks its chops. It knows now what it is going to get. Palacios is an old warrior. If he did not (by some inexplicable quirk) dye his flaring moustaches a jet black, I could remark that he has grown grey in the cause of American freedom. In his books, his speeches, his long political career, he has fought for the depressed north of Argentina (like our agricultural south) and for the reversal of Argentina's classic isolationist conduct in inter-American affairs. Now he brands his country's policy as shameful.

I wonder, as I listen, what price I shall have to pay for these impassioned speeches. The heads of two universities have turned a literary banquet into a political meeting. Political meetings are against the “state of siege.” And every word has been broadcast over a national hook-up. Nothing, of course, will be done to the Senator and the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs. But what about me—who have yet to give my first lecture? I am a bit uneasy; and so, I note, is Reissig.

The following day, the papers give full accounts of Mallea's speech

and mine; Martínez Estrada's poem is numerously reprinted. Little is said of the words of Saavedra Lamas and Palacios. But the whole nation has listened in by radio; the whole nation is talking of the dinner.

At my first lecture there will be a large crowd and I will be able to say what I wish. The danger is that it be my last permitted lecture. I have worked out my strategy. I shall discuss in general terms the "Deep War," the revolution beneath the overt war. Argentina will understand (I must not betray this profoundly moving confidence); but the government will be stumped on how to make trouble. In my second lecture I will variate my theme. It will be called: "You and We"; it will establish graphically that the Americas are all in the same boat; whatever our tastes and likes, we had better get along; for we shall sink or swim together. The hemisphere is a minority island, in population, in resources, in geographic mass: an island equally devoted to democracy, a fundamental way of life never tried; equally threatened, within and by a world that surrounds and might overwhelm us; a far vaster world, in which our values are either not shared or are already dangerously menaced with destruction. In my third lecture, I will shift the key again. Ignoring politics except in personal portraits of such men as Vice-President Wallace, I will speak of "New World Elements" in the United States; my aim, to win the confidence and affection, above all the sympathy, of the Argentine people for the hard-pressed creative forces of the American people. The three lectures under the auspices of the Colegio Libre will fulfill the letter of my contract. If they open for me a way into the nation, a way protected by the will of the Argentine people themselves, I shall go on. If not, I shall stop.

So much for strategy. What is my deepest purpose? Argentina has reached a crisis in her sick period of transition. She must go forward, must re-integrate in clear creative action; or she will have failed of her destiny. She must perform a part of leadership in the family of American nations; or she will turn against herself, all her weaknesses will become positive and rend her. The ideal of the New World as an organic hemisphere of American nations, each fulfilling its personal genius by devotion to the whole, is the incentive, the challenge, the medicine Argentina sorely needs. She must be cured of her false European nostalgias; of her false sense of separation from her neighbours. She must for her own sake, and for the sake of us all, be mobilized into American action. When, in all the years, I have expounded my American dream, I have had no listener and no collaborator more faithful than Argentina. That is not accident. If in the past she heard me when I spoke, it was because she heard herself. Now, by God, in her hour of confusion, she shall hear herself again!

Lectures in Argentina usually take place at 6.30 or 7.00. The work day is over, the dinner hour (from 8.30 to 10.00 according to the elegance of the diners) not yet begun. Infrequently, lectures take place at night, after dinner.

At six-thirty, on that day of my first lecture, I am waiting in my hotel room for Mallea, who is to call for me. He comes in, and I reach for my hat.

"Don't hurry to put on your hat," he says. "It's not certain you're going to talk."

I look my amazement.

"The police have not issued a licence."

He goes to the phone and speaks to Reissig at the Colegio. No news yet.

The streets approaching the Colegio are filled with a thick, quiet, stubborn crowd, blockading the autos and the trams. The doors of the Colegio are shut; the crowd refuses to leave. A former Argentine Ambassador to Great Britain improvisedly takes charge. He tells the crowd to preserve order—and to remain. Meetings in which public matters are to be discussed within the permitted limits of the state of siege require a police licence. But academic meetings do not. Reissig's tactics were to "assume," since my lectures were at the College, that they constituted "academic meetings": to avoid tempting the police by applying for a permit. The police have responded to this policy of appeasement by shutting the College doors. But the crowd blocking the traffic is not in favour of appeasement. Despite its Ambassador captain, it might become a mob. To appease it, the police let the doors be opened. In a very few minutes, the hall is packed; Calle Cangallo is crowded, but less vociferously. Still no police permit for the lecture.

All this I learn by way of bulletins from Mallea, who phones every five minutes to Reissig. I put on my hat. Even if I may not talk, I do not intend to remain cooped up—during so good a battle—in a hotel room.

We leave our taxi at Corrientes and walk the two blocks to Cangallo. The grey, narrow street is filled with men and women, standing expectant and silent. We pass the throng at the threshold, unable to get in; and through a side door reach the rear hall and a service elevator that takes us up to a fifth floor classroom. Reissig, white as the sheets in his hand—my lecture—greets me.

"You are going to speak," he says. "They've just this moment granted us a licence. The crowd did it. Imposing—really imposing! . . . But you must make certain little changes."

"I thought my lecture was the model of caution."

In a few places I have named names: Hitler, Mussolini, Germany. Out they must go; and in their stead, references any child can understand. Where I say fascism, I must change to "the philosophy . . . the theory . . . of fascism."

"That," Reissig wanly smiles, "makes it academic."

None of the changes mean a thing; except perhaps the puerility of the police or the excessive fear of Reissig. I don't know. It is unimportant. More important: by now, it is seven-thirty!

We go downstairs. The balcony floor reveals the throng solidly overflowing beyond the open doors, into side rooms where loudspeakers have been set up. The corridors leading to the main floor are solid (as are the aisles, inside); we can scarcely push our way through to the platform. The stairs up to it are crowded, the platform solid: chairs forward, standees rearward and to the walls of the wings. With Reissig, I push my way through, and at last stand face to face with my public.

Before I have begun my message, the people of Buenos Aires have given me theirs.

A few days later, on my way to the university town of La Plata, which is also the capital of the Province of Buenos Aires (the city of Buenos Aires is the Federal Capital), I have my first plunge, on this journey, into pampa. Through the crisp autumn, the fields shimmer. The horizon is indeterminate, except where a *monte* (which in Argentina is a cluster of trees) or a farm precipitate pampa and sky. The beauty of Rio de Janeiro seems garish against this subtlest suffusion of distance and time into instantaneity. The towns I drive through, suburbs of the pampa metropolis, are white, dimensionless precipitations of pampa. Their dull monotony of streets seem to crystallize the ubiquity of pampa. The men and women walking in the streets walk in nowhere; and their nostalgias, wistfully responsive to ideas and ideals (not in actions), seem to know it.

If this is metaphysical, it is Argentina. As once in Egypt, here is a metaphysical folk. Even its vulgarity partakes of metaphysics.

I give the same lecture, "The War Beneath the War," to an enormous audience of students and teachers. My public in Buenos Aires was mixed; from chauffeurs and workers to intellectuals. I note little difference here in the rapt and sensitive attention. My talk is to be broadcast over the provincial radio of Buenos Aires. At the last moment, with the wires set, the Governor cancels the arrangement. This explanation is issued by the authorities:

"Without prejudice to the prestige of the speaker, his publicly admitted position might result in the announced lecture giving utterance to opinions on the world situation which fall within the restrictions established by the national Government and this Province."

Next morning the papers of La Plata give prominence to this statement—without editorial comment, which would be dangerous; and publish practically my entire lecture, word for word. The papers of Buenos Aires and the interior, also without comment, headline the radio cancellation. There is disgusted talk everywhere. Not again will the authorities, state or federal, repeat the

action of the police in Buenos Aires or of the Governor in La Plata.

The reason is that my first lectures have found a response beyond any that I dreamed of. My strategy was to make an opening into the mind and heart of the people. The people have made their way to me. They have been looking for a means to express deeply their solicitude and conscience; and to satisfy their hunger for an interpretation of the world-scene which will justify their intuitions. They have found it.

Now the divided and hesitant University of Buenos Aires at last sends me a formal invitation; its authoritative platform is open to me. I undertake to give it two lectures (still unwritten): the most important of all. I shall entitle them, harmlessly: *The Two Ways: I. Toward Human Defeat. II. Toward Human Destiny*. The first will be an analysis of the totalitarian doctrines so dangerously attractive to the youth of these countries. The second will sketch a methodology for a working democratic world. And invitations pour in from every province, from every city. Universities, forums, workers' and improvised citizens' groups, invite me. If I accepted them all, I'd be in Argentina at least six months. Official invitations to visit and to lecture come from other countries. From the governments of Uruguay and Bolivia. A personal cable from Colombia's President Santos. From the University of Chile. Even little Paraguay is heard from. . . .

Buenos Aires is a white city. Bland, colourless. I suspect that the cities of Egypt were white. (White buildings do not make a white city.)

Argentina has become a land without dams. Its old dams . . . those the Spaniards brought with them of Church and tradition . . . have been dissolved by pampa. The dam of the pampero Indians, the natural repressive dearth of primitive economy, has been destroyed by science. The people have immense energies, exquisite sensibilities. They flow everywhere; they know much: there are no dams to store the power and the knowledge for action.

Nearly every day, *El Pampero*, chief pro-nazi organ, publishes a pasquinade or an editorial against me. I find them rather pleasant reading. It is satisfactory to observe the fascist rottenness taking so harmless a form. If only it stopped at that! I know it does not. I know the world bloody and broken; the world maniacally devoted . . . all its resources, all its genius . . . to the dull, intricate, gallant business of destruction and of defence from destruction, because of the phenomenon everywhere whose virulent form is *El Pampero*. When I can turn from this disaster, even for a moment, to a paragraph of impotent rage against "the Yankee-Jew Frank," it entertains me. (I haven't much time for entertainment.)

There are other "nationalist" sheets no less scurrilous and also

prolific in attacks. Some of the writers . . . Ramón Doll, for instance . . . were among my obsequious admirers on my first visit to Argentina. I am glad to say I never liked the *señoritos*. It was entirely possible to predict those whom the stress of the years would turn into fascists.

I am far too busy to be happy. Far too busy to sleep well or to digest my food. Nevertheless, the town . . . white beneath its metropolitan colours . . . seeps in on me. The people. They have not reacted against the pampa. They have been dissolved in it. Its colourless colour has infused them. I speak of the Porteño, the citizen of Buenos Aires: Spanish, Italian, Jew, German. . . . Even those of pure Spanish blood have lost their vertical passion. Yet what magnificent women are here! harbingers of new worlds. A world's beginning speaks through its women; a world's zenith through its men; a world's ending again through its women. And where are there such subtly intelligent crowds? In France, in China? The intellectuals, here as elsewhere, unless they are of the first class, bore me. The average farmer, mechanic or miner has dignity and grace; the average intellectual stinks. And alas, my work forces me to give them much time, although I minimize it ruthlessly. I must clear more time for the streets and cafés; for the port, *La Boca*; for the people.

I find I can work under new conditions. I wrote my first lectures at my table, in English; my secretary, Frida Weber, translated them; then she and perhaps María Rose Oliver and Mallea, together with me, worked over the Spanish text together. But language for me has always been primarily a music of the *ambiente*; when I become immersed in it, I think it and speak it. I find now I can dictate to Frida in Spanish. As I go along, she silently corrects my prose. When I read what *she* has written, I am amazed how well I write the language.

I had two radio talks to prepare at once; of half an hour each; and I was tired. I took Frida to a café on Esmeralda, where the tango goes on forever. We selected a discreet table in the shadows, far from where the Porteños and their women move in their locked dance; ordered Scotch-and-soda; and Frida placed her notebook on her knee. In three drinks' time I had got down the whole first talk. It was eight-thirty; past Frida's hour for going home to her family and dinner. I called for the bill. The waiter left my table; the proprietor and the band leader came back. They said: I owed them nothing; I had honoured the establishment; any time I wished to visit for work or relaxation, I was more than welcome. The band leader presented me with a copy of his latest published tango; and as I left, there was applause through the large room. Where else is such warmth given, not to movie stars, pugilists, politicians, but to a mere man of letters?

Here by the way are topical parts of that talk by radio ; composed within the music of the tango :

I wonder whether you people, who live within the atmosphere of tango and take it as your daily bread, realize that it is perhaps the profoundest folk-dance in the world. Three races of supreme plastic and æsthetic genius produced it: the Negro, the Indian and the Creole. It is an essentially modern dance, and of Buenos Aires. And yet the life of these three races with their deep, long history of struggle, of sorrow, of victory and defeat, is as intimately part of the tango as is the body of the girl who dances it and whose breath sings it ; the fecund rigidity of her stance, and the man's answering passion.

Is it not a pity that we are not more aware of the common treasures which surround us? Would we not be better men and women if we gave more conscious homage to the mystery of the sun, for instance, by whose light we live? if we more consciously recognized the blessing of air which comes within our body to unite us with the universe? You Argentines who listen idly to the tango, while you work in your kitchens and offices, while you talk with your families, without attention : stop a moment and consider what the tango is.

I have mentioned Egypt, whose genius was articulated perhaps best in its sculpture : a static art that most deeply expresses the death of movement in eternity. Well, the tango in this same profound sense is a *sculptural* dance-music. Go to any popular café in Buenos Aires. The boy and girl who dance the tango are worth neither more nor less than all the others in this sad world of ours. But the tango ennobles and transfigures them. Observe the man : his rigidly erect body does not turn ; his head maintains its profile with the body and against the cheek of his partner ; even the hands are firm, flat, like sculpture. And when the couple turn, their bodies, sculpturally joined as if of sensitized stone, move in a slow totality ; not a muscle, not a limb out of composition. The effect is rigorously sculpture. On all sides, the world is a tumult and a storm. This world is the armature of the music ; but within are stability, immobility.

It is the same with the dancers. The hunger of the male to overcome the woman ; the woman's need to struggle with all her strength and cunning in order that her conquest may be well-merited : this whirlpool of passions constitutes the superficial traits of the dance. More deeply, the lines of the tango are pure ; chastity predominates over the storming passion, giving them balance. The two bodies scarcely touch, nevertheless they are joined. Slowly, they move within the music, limning the music's movements, effacing no part of its superficial clamour and yet transfiguring it all in a plastic peace. Thus we must move through life. Storms close in all about us ; but do not overwhelm us. Our own passion responds and adds to the tumult ; but an inward restraint gives it form.

Now you know why I love the tango. It is a popular æsthetic expression of the tragic sense of life. The tragic sense of life is the true sense of life. It is the one real power, the one possible human victory over sorrow. It is the one knowledge . . . And the people who, in their popular and trivial everyday customs, have created this deep word, is a people with a destiny.

This new trick of working, as it were, *en route*, has its dangers as well as its delights. Acting President Ramón Castillo goes to the Capitol this afternoon to open the National Congress with a

message. I want to see him; but the proceedings will doubtless be dull and long-drawn-out; and I continue to be inhumanly busy. Not to waste time, I take Frida with me; when the show lags, or during the entr'actes, we'll work.

The box in which we have seats, close to the rostrum where Castillo will read, gives me a good view. I see the body of Ambassadors, including the nut-like little Jap and the Nazi chargé d'affaires; I study the Cabinet, including the vapid-faced Foreign Minister Guñazú; a distinguished face, since in Argentina stupidity is rare. The huge domed Palace has the embalmed dead air usual in legislative halls. Men get up and mumble incomprehensible reports to which no one listens. The ladies in the box across from ours, the wives of Cabinet officers and high functionaries, discreetly gossip. Boredom is ubiquitous. It is part of the dignity of a President to keep us waiting.

"Let's get on with our work." I start dictating to Frida.

Our box is very crowded; behind us are rows of standees, packed close and over us. A guard in clanking decorations politely pushes through and taps Frida's shoulder.

"It is against the rules," he says courteously, "to take notes on the proceedings."

"We are not taking notes on the proceedings. We are working on something quite independent."

"Nevertheless, it is against the rules—"

Resignedly, Frida puts away her pad. The waiting for Castillo continues. The guard comes back, smiling.

"It's all right," he says to me, "since you are working on something independent, you may proceed."

I thank him.

At last, in a hush, Castillo pops onto the rostrum, unsheathes his papers. There is no applause, and he expects none. He reads. He reads, his nose in the text, scarce raising his voice, which is clipped, cold, swift. The Deputies listen without concealment of their coolness. A few times, when he refers to his country's unassailable neutrality, to its friendship with *all* nations, there is a mist of applause from the gallery of the ladies; and an almost perceptible chill from the legislators. I find myself almost feeling sorry for this little man who looks like a disciplinarian schoolmaster.

The next afternoon I happened to be on the street when the newsboys began shouting "Pampero! Pampero!" They sell it with gusto; for they receive it gratis; the ten centavos per copy is pure profit; the Nazi Embassy foots the bill.

On the second page I find a drawing of myself (very much hebraicized, of course) seated with Frida, who wears a fabulous fur coat, in the Congressional box. The story, a column long, startlingly accurate in some of its details, its implications poisonously twisted, tells of our visit to hear Castillo. According to the fascist reporter, my secretary (unlike secretaries who work for mere

Argentine patriots) was wearing a sumptuously expensive garment. In order to show my contempt for the country I was visiting, and for its Chief Magistrate, I dictated, during his speech, a nostalgic rhapsody on Egypt and Palestine (the ancestral homes of my people). Several lines of what I said are quoted. Suddenly, the usher approaches to enforce the law against such interruptions. My secretary arrogantly tells him who I am. The usher retires; and at once returns in order obsequiously to inform me that I may proceed. I am a member of the race and of the country which Argentina must obey as "master"; its laws mean nothing . . . The article is cleverly written. The spy who wrote it or who furnished its material to the writer, must have been very close to us indeed. For I did use the words he quoted about Egypt; I was, in fact, discussing Argentina's peculiar beauty and comparing it with Egypt's. (The addition about Palestine was merely the poet's licence.)

Frida and I resolve to be more cautious about working in public. But if the nazis have so good a net of spies, was it not incautious to show their hand so soon and so harmlessly? Now I am forewarned. Perhaps they are confident that they can do what they want, when they want.

Our Ambassador, Norman Armour, takes me to call on Castillo in the Casa Rosada. This is the "White House" of Argentina; the President's office, not his residence. If the Chief Magistrate has no home in town, he rents one. The Casa Rosada, where in more sanguine days I talked philosophy with Hipólito Irigoyen (who lived in two poor rooms over a cigar store) is a warm mansion, rather English is its squat dignity, between the Avenida de Mayo and the river. In normal times the river hums with traffic; now the great docks are silent. The Avenida, with its small trees and great cafés, is never silent. About the "rose mansion," officially the Casa de Gobierno, is a park; and on its flank a lovely colonial church.

The people are agog with the visit of the great Spanish ophthalmologist, Ramón Castroviejo, who has flown down from New York (a democrat, therefore an exile from Spain), to examine the possibilities of performing an operation on blind President Ortiz. With his sight restored, Ortiz may return to office. Rumours are rife in the streets of Buenos Aires. Castroviejo wants to operate; but is prevented by the *junta* of reactionary doctors. Or Castroviejo has been sent by President Roosevelt with instructions to "rescue" Ortiz and bring him back to Washington. Or Castroviejo has declared the chance of a successful operation one in a hundred; and Ortiz insists on taking the one chance. Only this is certain: the deep anxiety of the people who have made a myth of their sick President and a hero of a visiting physician.

We are shown through an anteroom where Ministers wait to see Castillo (several greet me warmly), straight to the rich, red-

brocaded little chamber where Castillo gets up and gives me both his hands. His cordiality is disarming. Before I can say a word, he launches into praise of my lectures; he has known me many years, he says, through my books; and he bids me welcome again in Argentina.

I tell him I'm surprised. In my country, I say, men of the law don't usually find time to read the poets. I have said *hombres de derecho*: men of law (Castillo was a judge in Catamarca before he became dean of the Law School of the University of Buenos Aires). He misunderstands me.

"*Hombres de la derecha*," he replies, "men of the right may study and even be sympathetic with men of the left."

I laugh at the misunderstanding, and welcome it. Now it will be easier to come to grips with him.

"Go ahead," he says, relaxing in his armchair, smiling and clasping his hands.

I say that I need to tell him my sense of the hemisphere; my anxiety for Argentina. The remark about the hemisphere he takes indulgently, as if I had recited a line from a familiar sonnet. The anxiety for his country moves him to protest. I really shouldn't worry. But of course he wants to hear me. It will be a joy for him, deluged with routine, to cross swords with so respected a foe.

"It's a long story," I say. "And this is a formal visit." I look at Mr. Armour, who is having a good time. (Despite the fact that he is American Ambassador in a Spanish-speaking country, Mr. Armour *does* speak Spanish.) "I don't know how long visits of this kind should last. But I did see your Minister of War, your Minister of Agriculture, your Minister of the Interior . . . all waiting."

"Let them wait," says Doctor Castillo. "Let's begin the battle, at least, now. We don't have to finish it this afternoon. We can do that later on when you return from your north tour."

If a man is both timid and proud, a good way to get to know him, I have found, is to attack him frontally, courteously. In his response to the challenge, he reveals himself. Castillo is being cordial far beyond protocol. I have begun to discern this same cordiality all about me in official circles. What does it mean?

Castillo is a little, thickset man with a soft way, soft high voice, and cool, twinkling, reserved eyes. His mind is agile, but within a small periphery. His suave guardedness conceals that he is deeply insecure. I doubt that he is cruel, ruthless or voracious, like the crowd he favours. But I feel him capable of ignoring the cruel, the ruthless, the voracious; if he can find the letter of some law to help him. His purpose is to keep things as they are. Power, by an uncourted Providence, has fallen into his hand. He means to keep it there. If Castillo were a Frenchman from some poor southern province, corresponding to his northern, indigent Catamarca, he would be a miser. No man of Hispanic blood can be a miser. Castillo hoards power. That is the secret of his conservatism, of his

indubitable, proved benevolence with the nazis who promise survival to his class. (He's an old man, he needs not peer too far into the future.) The methods of the fascists he will not see; as he has never bothered to see the methods of the landlords in Misiones and Catamarca. (When they ride on their own estancias at night, they have to go guarded.)

Not long after my introductory interview with Ramón Castillo, I visited President Ortiz. Roberto Ortiz, a railroad lawyer reputed to be worth forty million pesos, lived in a big apartment on Callao, whose dark dullness evidenced the solid wealth that has no impulse for display. When he became President, there was little to distinguish him from the best of his suave and cultured crowd: men of law or arms who had recaptured the land, and were without the genuine "noblesse oblige" of their aristocratic fathers. Power chastened Ortiz. Before long, he disquieted his Party by bluntly stating that he owed office to fraudulent elections; and that he intended to restore legality in the Republic. Within a year he lost his wife; was stricken with diabetes, and blindness. He gave up his office. "A President," he told me, "who cannot look into the eyes of the men he must consult dare not trust their words." He experienced a kind of Job conversion. Atmospherically, if not sharply, he recognized the "Deep War" and wanted Argentina to take her due place of leadership in the hemisphere and in the battle.

Dr. Ortiz received me in a little salon like the card rooms of Louis Quatorze mansions. He was a big, stocky man whose face—the banal, smooth face of the lawyer—had been bitten by suffering and sorrow. I saw, within the seeming robustness, power wounded and stricken; a pallor of pain; a spiritual anguish and humility which the organism itself, still that of the successful politician, could not recognize or assimilate. As he spoke, his eyes seemed to look at me. Their brown brightness, through the tortoise-shell glasses, had the deadness of varnish. Ortiz could not see, save perhaps a vague light from the window he was facing. Much was said, signifying little. But that little was much. Ortiz savagely criticized the government for its moral ambiguity; for not sharply situating Argentina on the side of right. He promised me he would exert whatever pressure and influence he could; even if he resigned—as seemed inevitable. Yes; he might go to the United States for an operation. Voice and body were brave; far within, his spirit was retreating. . . .

He asked me to come again, on my return from the north.

In two weeks he was dead.

Interviews, luncheons, dinners (when more than six are present, I must always say "a few words"; when there are less than ten, the talk soon turns into arduous discussion); meetings with important or self-important individuals I can't avoid; the preparing of

lectures, the answering of an enormous correspondence; most taxing of all: the keeping my nerves and senses open and my mind in shape for recording what they give me—no wonder there is little time for my friends. Fondly I promise myself a happier future.

Even so, there are delightful hours. Socratic talks with students. Luncheons with a friend in a restaurant of *La Boca* where there is sawdust on the floor, no cloth on the table, and the dinner equals New York's *Twenty-One* or *Crillon*.

I have found here some of my dear compatriots of Spain: comrades of Barcelona and Madrid, in those apocalyptic days whose bloody aftermath for the craven "democratic" world we foretold and did all we could to forestall.

I dine at the home of Rafael Dieste and his wife, Carmen, whose deep-gashed arm (I remember as she serves me) bears the scar of the bombing and machine-gunning in Figueras. She was escaping with a friend who bore her baby in her arms. The Fascists killed the mother. Carmen, covered with blood, rescued the infant and carried it with her across the frontier to a prison camp in France. She found her husband, a year later, in Montevideo. My dear Arturo Serrano Plaja comes in, one of Spain's best poets; my companion on Lister's front on the Ebro. With him, his wife, Claude, who is the daughter of one of my dearest friends, Jean-Richard Bloch, the French writer. I have been worried about Jean, not daring to communicate with him in Paris, where, the last I heard, he was moving from house to house, dodging the nazis. Claude brings me good news (here in Buenos Aires!). Her father was helped out of the country by the French police, and is safe in Moscow. Rafael Alberti, Spain's famous Communist poet, bursts in, dynamic as ever, with his gallant wife, María Teresa León. They tell me of their escape from Madrid (Alberti was condemned to death, *in absentia*, by Franco): the days of hiding in a cave, the hair-raising flight in a plane to Africa with the foe pursuing. And my loyal brother, Jacinto Toryho and his wife, comrades in Barcelona who openly fought for me when certain Communists tried—in vain—to get me into trouble. The atmosphere is joyous: it is "old home week" after the years.

Amazing it is to see these disparate, deeply individual Spaniards who have all come through the fire and agony of Spain, and come out—*themselves*; their initial characters unaltered.

Alberti, the sensitive, sensuous, self-indulgent poet, has grown a little fat, his eyes a trifle dimmed. Would not a life of ease have had just this effect upon him? His wife, triumphant bloom of energy and beauty: if she had lived triumphantly in Paris, could she have appeared more resilient, better-nurtured? Rafael Dieste, the deep, quiet, intelligent soul; and his mate, Carmen, dolour and tenderness which the fire could not coarsen. But they would have suffered, wheresoever. Arturo Serrano Plaja, nervous, tough of mind, high-strung, integral: less his trials than his own high tension have kept

him lean. And Jacinto Toryho, the Anarchosyndicalist: the same pure, simple Christian spirit, despite the world of heartbreak and stratagem which has been his life for years.

It is clear: the soil and air and rhythms of our childhood form us far more definitively than any event of adult life. War may kill the adult, or cripple him. It is itself effect, rather than cause, of the adult nature which goes on, adjusted, with very little basic change of taste or temperament or knowledge. War character forming must be principally upon children. I should like to study the children today in Europe.

And this is the crowning irony of God's law: the sins of the parents are NOT visited upon the parents (who deeply love their sins, including war) but upon the children.

I have been asked to lunch with Dr. Guillermo Rothe. I want very much to meet him, but I prefer that it be face to face, tête-à-tête. Even "intimate" luncheons and dinners, at which there is always a third, a fourth, a fifth, are dilutions. Rothe, a lawyer from Córdoba and one of the legal *junta* who have captured the country, is Minister of Justice. It is he who is supposed to have shaped Argentina's solitary course in the Rio Conference. He is the strong man of the Cabinet; the one with most influence on Castillo.

Despite his half-German origin, Rothe is all Hispanic. We talked for an hour; or rather, I listened to his veiled, diffuse, tangential words; and tried to pierce them. I asked two or three questions; each inspired an almost endless, complicated answer.

One question: "Why, in a democratic country, at an hour when it is crucially important for the people to explore its own mind, the state of siege?" His answer was a masterpiece of tergiversation. The state of siege was a mere local remedy, he said, to eliminate the passion-rousing extremists. Had I been troubled by its restrictions? Dr. Rothe swore I never would be.

We spoke of the Rio Conference. He did not try to hide his disapproval of Sumner Welles, who had come down "with a document in his hand for us all to sign on the dotted line." I agreed. But did not the crisis of the hour minimize the importance of manner, of pride, even of *pundonor*? If our town is burning, do we stand on ceremony with the chap who, perhaps domineeringly, in the moment of excitement, tells us to get together and put the fire out? He had no answer, tilting his hot eyes upward, always smiling.

Another question: "Does not Argentina have a responsible role in hemisphere solidarity?" The answer began with an anecdote and ended with a stern harangue about the classic weakness of Spain: her constant involvement in wars that did not concern her. This had ruined Spain; this shall not ruin Argentina. She will fight her own wars, none other.

"But is this a war in the sense of the dynastic wars of Spain, to which you refer? Is this not a world revolution?"

The dark face of Dr. Rothe grew even darker; although the constant smile³ did not vanish. He implied that, whatever revolution there might be, Argentina would play her part in it, at home. We were both a bit diffident on this ground, knowing that despite our studied courtesy, we could not feign unanimity on the ground of social revolution.

Rothe is a dark, passionate, hidden man: a man whose integrity (in questions like money or loyalty) is founded upon a profound corruption of the spirit, of which he himself is utterly unconscious. He is the nationalist, ready to crucify his people without the remotest doubt that he is serving them. He was extremely cordial; and urged me to come and talk with him at any hour. "*Estoy á sus órdenes.*" He had not quite succeeded in veiling within his eyes his resentment, his hate for my country.

THE PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES

The ideas for my two crucial lectures are assembled: the ones on fascism, man's defeat and its true alternative, man's democratic destiny. I shall give them, not only in the University of Buenos Aires but as well in the Universities of Córdoba, of the Litoral and of Tucumán. The only trouble: it has been physically impossible to find time to write the lectures. I am escaping for four days to Victoria Ocampo's villa in Mar del Plata. Four days, after a lecture in the local theatre, to work without interruptions, and also to see my friend.

Tota Cuevas de Vera is calling for me at two o'clock. After a furiously busy morning, I rush off to lunch with John Griffiths, the Embassy's cultural attaché. With him is a solemn-faced Argentine lady whose name I forget, who has come to tell me that I am handling her people far too gently. Come right out with it, she insists: tell us *what's wrong with us* and *what we must do*. I remind her that I am not here to give advice. My plan is to reveal the world situation in all its essentials: to bring home the truth: to point out the place in this crisis of America and of Argentina. Argentina, then, must draw her own conclusions. If I jumped to those conclusions myself, I should ruin the creative work of my mission.

Everything is ready; Frida has packed my bag: Tota and I set out through the lovely, subtle pampa. It is a clear afternoon of late autumn; silently, motionless, the ruddy world is burning. Pampa makes everything motionless: trees, cows, horses, men, are held in its vast fixity. The birds become ripples on a still, deep water. We, driving swiftly, seem motionless also. I take out my papers and work: put them aside and watch the fuming world, the grey-green pampa fusing into grey-blue sky, the *montes* of ombú and tala standing within them, like the herds of cattle and like our car.

Night falls before we reach *Las Viboras*, an estancia of thirty thousand acres owned by one of Tota's brothers. The pampa

becomes an iron sea at night: black, rigid under the liquid sky, and ourselves fragile and liquid fleeing through it. The steward at *Las Viboras* is a man named Bailey: Chile-born, Mexico-bred, Argentine for twenty-five years. He welcomes us to a severe, grey room where the fire burns in the hearth, and whisky and soda are ready for us on the table. Never touches it himself, he explains. He and his wife, who is half Argentine, half English, join us at dinner. The room is all grey; grey, built-in corner cupboards, grey panels, grey mantel on which stands a bronze of racing horses. On the opposite wall is a wash painting of an ostrich bleeding to death on the pampa: horrible and beautiful.

At six, Bailey wakes me, bringing into my room a lamp and a stove. I remain in bed for three hours working on my lecture. Then I put on bombachas and boots, and with a gaucho guide ride out into the pampa. The morning is birds, steer, scampering ostriches, *montes* of tala, immense sky, invisible horizons. The sweet sweat of my horse pervades the morning. We are one: body of horse and body of mine, motionless within the world motion. On the way back I meet Tota, who has gone galloping with Bailey while I worked. I shave; we breakfast; and are off to Mar del Plata. Mr. and Mrs. Bailey and their children stand under the row of eucalyptus with the house behind them and wave us a good journey.

Victoria's villa was built by her father over sixty years ago, who brought it, beam by beam, from England. It has long since become part of Argentina: its great, bare rooms warmed in winter, cooled in summer by the wisdom of its furnishings. It stands in a walled park. Outside, the pampa, suddenly perpendicular, in long green lunges falls down to the sea.

We arrived in time for late lunch. Eight years ago I spent the summer month of December here, working on a novel. It is a joy to find again Victoria's household: Fanny, the nurse, José, the butler, Pepa, Antonio, the gardener and his wife: intimate parts of Victoria's life since her childhood, and until death.*

Late that afternoon I lecture on "New World Elements in the United States" in a movie house, *El Odeón*, packed to the highest balcony with a mixed public: shopkeepers, workers from the fisheries, servers of the huge summer population. They listen with a terrible silence that my few jokes fail to break. They listen as if fascinated. Not giving themselves, not refusing: sceptical, yet warm and somehow won by intuition of a good will in me that corresponds to their own. This is a public not used to hearing lectures.

Here at the Villa Victoria with us are Roger Callois, the young French refugee writer, and his wife. I work furiously at the new lectures, seeing my friends only at lunch and dinner.

* Victoria once told me that if she lost all her money, she would have to share her tenement room with these members of her household, because they would simply refuse to leave her.

Roger represents the intellectual discipline of France, methodical, pure; yet poignantly limited. No American, Argentine or other, can equal his strictly confined clarities and capacity for precision. He does not touch, although immersed in it, the rough, aspirant, chaotic world-vision, the generous reach far beyond grasp, of us Americans. His wife is the French earth; sober, homely, competent, loyal. It is part of Roger's French exactness that he has chosen her; it is the profound spirit of France's earth, incarnate in her, that she has chosen him.

Victoria has not changed with the years, save in the sense of more sharpness of mind, greater purity of spirit, an added social acerbity. She has sold her town house (modelled by herself, and one of the loveliest of modern homes) and lives now exclusively in San Isidro, a village on the Rio de la Plata, twenty miles from Buenos Aires, or here in Mar del Plata. (She has written a book with illustrations on San Isidro, which is a little masterpiece. I can imagine an Egyptian priestess of the epoch of *The Book of the Dead* writing a similar hieroglyphic poem on the Nile, on the lush mystery, green and human, of its banks.) Victoria's life has been that of a priestess in an age which only dimly recalls, and sharply resents, the priestly function. Priestess of a pagan cult: a pure secularization into æsthetic sensibility and search, of her race's dynamic, passionate, vertical power. Victoria, of course, is a famous woman in all Ibero-America; and almost universally misunderstood. There have been many handicaps to understanding; and she has lacked the will, and the gift, to explain herself. A very tall, extremely beautiful woman, she looks like an Amazon: which conceals from the vulgar eye her childlike, girlish nature. Passionately, aggressively devoted to the arts, she passes for an intellectual; whereas her true domain is that of intimate, of exquisite intuition. Rich and as impatient as a child princess when she is crossed in little things, her deep humility before life, her strict religiosity (that rejects the dogmas of her Church) have gone unnoticed. Close friend of the best writers and musicians and painters of Paris and London, she is known by few for what she really is: a daughter of the pampa, a good trencherwoman, a peasant. With all her remarkable culture, she has never lost the freshness and naïveté of the child who first looked eagerly out upon the world. She is capable of meeting a President of her Republic five times and forgetting each time who he is and that she already has met him; and yet, of complaining that her class, whom she has consistently snubbed all her life, should cordially hate her.

Victoria has an aunt, an old darling named Josefina Cobo, who lives on a typical aristocrat's estancia twenty miles north of Mar del Plata. I was there eight years ago; and Aunt Josefina insists—lectures or no lectures—that I must come again. Besides, she has heard my radio talk on Argentine food. She intends "to give me some." (I recall that earlier visit. There's a high tower on the place,

entirely inhabited by pigeons. I admired it, and confessed that I liked squabs. Next day a huge hamper of the birds was delivered at Mar del Plata.)

On the treeless pampa, many years ago, Señor Cobo planted trees. Now we approach a forest of two million: eucalyptus, gums, nut-trees, tropical trees, northern pines. At the main gate, open and ready for us, sit two gauchos at attention on their horses; they are dressed in gala ponchos, their best bombachas and sombreros. We pass down a stately corridor of eucalyptus, swarded in soft grass. Through the broken vistas we see huge lawns with cattle, llama, horses, grazing. We pass the tower, tenement of the pigeons. Beyond an artificial lake with bridges and grottoes on the raised banks, we come to the main house: a rococo jewel, ornate, varicoloured, naïvely gay and a trifle fussy in the perfect greensward, like a young matron in fluffs and crinoline. Perhaps, thus, the young wife Doña Josefina, a generation ago. Before I go in, I turn: the vista is superb, of lawn and terraced lake and groves of trees; and beyond, dimly, the pervasive pampa. Outside the main hall, through the glass doors, I see a huge wood-fire burning; and ten feet from it, spitted, hang two whole lambs, a month old. The "something Argentine to eat" is to be the famous *corderito al asador*. Two gauchos, experts at the art, nurse the meat; tempering the remote flame, turning the savoury flesh.

The elegance of these great Argentine estancias is incomparable. True, there are estates in England and in our America, where the wealth is as lavish; but the great estancias have an element in the pampa air . . . an ease, a generous amplitude, a quiet . . . which no other luxury in the world, however ruthlessly mastered by good taste, can equal. The feast is not ostentatious. It begins before we sit down to table, with a sherry dry as the best Montilla of Spain's Córdoba, but stronger bodied. I touch the fore-dishes sparingly, waiting for the *corderito*. The glass doors are opened; the butlers collaborate with the gauchos to bring the meat straight from the flame to us. I will not attempt to describe it.

Tota and the Caillóis drive from *La Harmonía* (that is the name of the place) to Buenos Aires; the lectures go back with Tota, who will deliver them to Frida. It is my last day. Victoria and I walk alone through the gracious wood to the estancia entrance.

We visit the town: the casino, the yacht club, the boardwalk with its solid, sumptuous hotels, and the beach. The sea at this South Atlantic point is full of iodine, and usually angry. Then we drive to a small fisherman's port, a cluster of mean houses, tin, zinc, wood . . . saved by the sun and the green. We end at a movie: I need to see an Argentine movie.

As Victoria warned me, it was bad . . . very bad, but unexpectedly illuminating. The actors and actresses have not learned a cinema technique. They behave before the camera like human beings. That is, they express emotion, thought, struggle, like human beings.

But since they do so with no capacity of translation to the film-medium, and since the play's argument is banal and fictitious, the human-ness becomes almost sub-human. They appear on the screen to be trained animals, going through human motions. Their inappropriate naturalness offsets, sharply, the stylization of our Hollywood art. Ours is a shallow stylization, emptied of all emotional, intellectual, spiritual content. All that remains in it is a swift, glib continuum of gestures: a formula whose appeal to the public consists of the public's association with its own emotional, intellectual and spiritual content. Literally, nothing is added, nothing is changed, of the psychological material with which the public comes to the theatre. A sterile art—if ever there was one.

If the Argentines (like the French before the German conquest) achieve a movie technique of their own, whose stylization preserve emotional, intellectual content, they will outstrip us—as did the French.

I was worried, as I started the long motor trip from Mar del Plata to Bahía Blanca, the southern wheat port of the Province; worried because of the three men who had come up the day before to fetch me. They dropped in at Villa Victoria, the night before. Three culture-hungry, culture-greedy men. They sat down, dropped their hats on the floor, and without even taking off their coats, began bombarding me with questions. Colossal questions! Those that dealt with merely national problems were the baby ones. Well, the trip was trying enough for a number of reasons; but not because of my three hosts, who proved to be sensitive, affectionate;—before the frigid June night gripped us, real companions.

My error was to judge these three rather crude provincials by their equivalent in a small American town, where they would be ignorant, intolerant of ideas or utterly incapable of handling them: shut to literature and the arts; commercially efficient barbarians. Men of their class in Argentina, with no more intrinsic moral or intellectual worth, are products of another breeding. Hence they are eager for spiritual and intellectual values, receptive to ideas, as our provincials to baseball and mechanics. They had read a good deal; but the point is, they knew how to read. I was much moved when they told me their disorientation at the start of the War: another struggle between imperialisms? what did it have to do with Argentina? Then they read two articles of mine published by *Sur*: "Our Guilt in Fascism" and "American Inventory." They got up at political meetings in public halls and in the streets of Bahía Blanca (that was before Castillo's state of siege) and on the strength of these ideas convinced their townsfolk that . . . despite French and British crimes . . . America's place and Argentina's was on the side of the Allies; and the sooner the better.

Imagine local political leaders of Scranton or Kansas City quoting an article from *The Nation*!

About fifty miles southwest of Mar del Plata, the road turned bad. We drove through Nicochea, little wheat port, and saw the huge *estivas*: mounds of wheat fifty feet high, a hundred feet long—wheat without market, while Europe starved; fragilely defended from rats and rain by canvas.

First it was hot, then it was cold on the pampa. Immensely distant, we saw the dim blue outline of the Sierra de Tandil, standing on the table of the Province. Just before dark, near the town of Tres Arroyos, we had a blow-out. A gaucho came up from the field, to pass the time of day. I borrowed his horse and trotted through the darkling, hardening pampa, which turns to iron as the sun leaves it. I felt again, wondrously true . . . a clear somatic equivalent of a mystic state . . . my motion's fixity (as we cantered) within immobility.

They had telephoned the day before to the Villa Victoria from Tres Arroyos, a wheat town of perhaps thirty thousand. They had read that I was motoring through on my way to Bahía Blanca. Would I not stop and give them a lecture? I explained that I had no time; which was true. They told me they had arranged a caravan of cars to carry a load of them the hundred miles to Bahía Blanca, in order to hear me. They had just been informed there were no more seats. They wanted, they *needed*, to hear me. And I was sorry, very sorry.

After my ride on the gaucho's borrowed pony, and after the icy night had fallen, we rolled into Tres Arroyos, chilled to the bone; and went to a café for hot tea and toddy. Soon the café was crowded: journalists, photographers, teachers (all the town's teachers), tradesfolk, students. They crowded around, while we warmed our bellies and the orchestra played tangoes. Then they grouped the tables in a huge wreath around me and fired questions. When I finished answering them, it occurred to me that they had had their lecture.

"Your trip," said one of my companions, "takes on the appearance of a political tour."

"Yes," I replied. "But the subjects discussed are different, and harder."

Before me are weeks of this . . . months! And I am not a politician.

It is as difficult to describe Bahía Blanca, typical pampa city, as it is to describe the pampa. The trait of the clean bland streets is their want of traits; characterlessness is their character. They are not mean, they are not brilliant; not rich, not poor. The architecture is not good, not bad. Even their climate is neutral: when the north wind sweeps, it is hot; when the south wind, it is cold. One would expect the dwellers in a town so anodyne to be as anodyne. One is amazed to find in them varied and generous emotion.

They make of my visit less a success than an ovation. The newspapers turn into confessionals. In a typical editorial, *La Nueva Provincia* tells me what the pampa is; how it suffers; how it is

determined, despite stubborn impediments, "to go forward in the true American way." This nostalgia of this folk is twofold. Pampa itself; distance, remoteness, dissolution made immediate and atmospheric, is nostalgia. But the result in the folk is a poignant world-awareness, which takes the form of loss and search. The sea-remoteness from Europe, cultural fatherland, and from the United States, continental leader, doubles the nostalgia of mood and pampa.

The editorial closes (and I quote it as typical of hundreds):

"Amigos de Bahía Blanca; está con nosotros el hermano mayor en el vínculo de la tierra continental."

That afternoon I go to the radio station and talk to the vast, thinly peopled Patagonian world that begins south of Bahía Blanca. A world I have never seen; a world that has been shamefully neglected by every Argentine government since the independence. As I speak to this huge emptiness, half a million square miles with less than half a million men and women, I try to picture the listening lone rancher and his wife, the sheepman of Tierra del Fuego. I try to give them words that will warm them.

I know the land north and west better. Years ago, when I needed a month of solitude to finish a book, my friend Enrique Mallea, the brother of Eduardo and a judge in Bahía Blanca, found me a ranch in the Sierra de la Ventana. Here, in the long, flat valleys from which the bare mountains rise like walls, is grown some of the best wheat of the world. I lived alone on the ranch, with a couple of gauchos, twenty horses, and twenty dogs. The dogs used to wake me, nights, when they caught the scent of a hare or a fox and howled into full chase. The horses were for me to choose from, afternoons, when I was ready for my ride. Sometimes I climbed the Sierra and looked west into the distant Gobierno de la Pampa, where the pampa is bleak. Sometimes I dropped in on neighbours, the nearest five miles down the valley; all equally hospitable. I remember a German, a Frenchman, a Russian Jew among them, who gave me delicious things to eat and drink, typical of their fatherlands. And sometimes, from the Sierra top, I looked south toward Patagonia, toward Tierra del Fuego, a thousand miles away. I longed to see that land. . . .

Then the lecture. The hall packed, many standing. A religious silence, no interruptions for applause. A deep, tacit devotion to an American dream which this folk feels I stand for.

The night train back to Buenos Aires. . . .

NORTH TOUR

Rosario, vital and crude, tough and tender: the true city of Argentina. It lies on the Paraná, about one hundred and fifty miles

northwest of Buenos Aires. The river here seems to be wide; actually what you take to be its farther shore is an island; cross that and it is fifty miles to the Entre Ríos bank. Rosario's citizens in the main are immigrants or their children. Eighty years ago it was a village of five thousand. All its six hundred thousand today are, without emphasis, Argentines.

Nowhere is the persuasion of the rich land and the moist sky more potent. The power of Rosario is not manifest at first. Particularly now; the town being a port for wheat and the nation's grain rotting in the *estivas*. (The livestock market booms; and hard times are still distant.) The streets are grubby like the streets of Brooklyn or Chicago. The folk's gait is slower than it was when I first was here in 1929. They are not sure they know where they are going; they are painfully sure they do not know . . . or like . . . where the nation is going. Hipólito Irigoyen and his radical party, before it went to pieces, was particularly strong in Rosario, which in those days aspired to national leadership. When Irigoyen fumbled, Rosario lost the ball to Buenos Aires and has never regained it. Even the chiefs of its own administrative offices are likely to be absentee bosses, living in the Capital. The Rosarino will tell you this, and a lot more, as soon as he can trust you. Even if he is the sensitive kind, even if he is an intellectual, there is in him an earthy air, a bear-like grace that is gone from Buenos Aires. Chicago has something of it: call it a prairie sweetness, like the blades of grass that Sandburg sang, under the brick and stone.

I suppose the family connection between Chicago and Rosario is that of a creative chaos. There are other analogies. (Do not forget, analogies are a danger unless you rein them in the moment they begin thinking themselves identities.) Rosario, like Chicago, is a freshwater port; a great wheat and packing centre. Rosario, like Chicago, is not the capital of her state (the Argentines call them provinces); but has made her way, alone, by sheer commercial and industrial bulk, often against both local and federal politicians. (For instance: Rosario is about halfway between Buenos Aires, south, and Santiago del Estero, north. Yet goods sent from Santiago to Buenos Aires pay less freight than if they go halfway, to Rosario, the logical port for transferring them to ships.)

Here's a more telling analogy. Chicago revealed its first modern architecture to the United States. Rosario can claim a like leadership. There's a new functional form in Rosario which has learned the lessons of Wright, Gropius, Corbusier and company without becoming, like so much of the new work in Buenos Aires, derivative or merely stylish. You can pick it out in the commercial and residential streets, among the still prevailing, hideous late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century houses. It is flamboyant; it is not always good; it is probably never as good as the best new architecture in Mexico. But it is vitally poetic and full of promise. Surging dramatic towers, exterior spiral stairs, summing

to impressiveness. The functional perpendicular of office buildings is somehow counterblanced by the use of horizontal subsidiary forms that give the measure of the pampa. (Across the street, perhaps, an old tiled patio with orange trees in blossom.) Apartment buildings will have the comfortable mass that flat-homes require; but the façades and flanks present variations through balconies and setbacks;—subtle and horizontal, all through ten or fifteen stories.

As Lewis Mumford once said: "Architecture never lies." The fresh fertility of Rosario begins to speak through its new buildings. Baulked politically, intellectually latent, economically depressed, it is today an anxious cry. Its ferment swirls and generates heat.

The routed gaucho, always a poet with his guitar and his improvised *canción*, became, before he died, the great poet of *Martín Fierro*. Analogously, the unease of Rosario finds creative form: in architecture; in the best school of painting of the country; in a still groping labour movement which may avoid both the defeatism and the dogmatism of the Capital's unions. Here, not in Buenos Aires, is the best gallery devoted to modern national art. Here, not in Buenos Aires, is perhaps the country's most original school: the *Escuela Experimental Carrasco*,* in a poor workers' district, called the Barrio Alberdi after the great Argentine revolutionary writer.

The gaucho, as an economic reality in Argentina, is dead; modern economics and machinery reduced him in the flesh; the great schoolmaster, Sarmiento, with gaucho energy destroyed his prestige in that savage masterpiece, *Facundo*. As a trait of energy and character, the gaucho is suffused through the nation . . . far beyond the literal confines of the pampa. Something of the sort may happen to Rosario, the mythic Argentine boom-town. I do not mean that Rosario will die. It is still overwhelmingly Argentina's second city. But other towns, south and north, are competing with it: Córdoba, Tucumán, Mendoza, Bahía Blanca. Its spirit may become an archetype, a symbol. That spirit is of creative and revolutionary independence. And it has taken, as the adversary, the absorptive power . . . bureaucratic, modish, financial . . . of Buenos Aires.

Here is drama. From its dialectic of forces, much may be hoped for.

On a lovely morning, soft like our June, but colder, much colder, even in the sun, I drove along the Paraná from Rosario to Santa Fe,

* The School is directed by Olga Cassetini, the daughter of Italian immigrants. The morning that I spent in this School was one of the most memorable of my journey. The sensitivity and subtle intelligence of the pupils, children of an underpaid proletariat, seemed to be like what one might find, in the United States, in progressive private schools whose children came from culturally superior homes.

the Provincial capital and main seat of the Universidad del Litoral, whose faculties are apportioned among four cities on the river: Rosario, Sante Fe, Paraná and, far to the north, Corrientes. With me was one of my new young friends, won by my Rosario lectures: Nicolas Babini, student of architecture in the Faculty of Rosario; whose father is the brilliant mathematician in the Faculty of Santa Fe.

The land reminds me of the Nile. Its almost obtrusive fertility; the musing counterpoint of its great horizontal fields and of its trees . . . willows, eucalyptus . . . that appear less to reach skyward than to bring the sky down to horizontal earth. The fussy foliage, heavily drooping, lends itself to the illusion: all the dimensions become pampa. I think, as we ride, of the title of a book of verse by the Argentine poet, Francisco Luis Bernardez. *Cielo de Tierra* . . . sky of earth! Bernardez is a Catholic and from Córdoba. In the most secular of Hispanic countries; and from a mountain province. Nevertheless, pampa is of his vision and of his organ-like music.

On the way we made four stops, all typical within the lush riverland; all subtly redolent of pampa. In San Lorenzo, we saw a colonial convent: its lines horizontal, its façade chaste and unemphatic, like a sentence by General San Martín. Farther on we visited the new Provincial Insane Asylum. It consists of many small, completely detached pavilions, low, lean, graceful, a bit too mathematical and pure in their logic. Functional architecture without tenderness. It is the work of an Argentine of Russian Jewish origin: Vladimir Acosta. The lack of tenderness is Acosta's lack of complete assimilation in the pampa. The flamboyant, less severe functionalism of Rosario is more fertile.

Next we visited the Province's modern penitentiary, a building whose coloured brick and stones gave it a warmth rare in such institutions. The warden, Alberto Ramos Mexía, showed us around and revealed himself a gentleman. When I talked with a convict he distances the guards and withdrew out of earshot. The system is individualistic, almost monastic. Each prisoner had his private cell, which he may make his own with guitar, radio, books, pictures and desk. Here he takes all his meals. And when he joins his fellows in the workshop, talk is forbidden. The first degree murderers get life sentence. After twenty years their case is reviewed, and they may be released. Among them, I spoke with several Indian mestizos; and these were the most sullen. I felt, in their deep cultural dislocation, the causes of indolence and of crime. Here, as always, when I am in a prison, I was struck by the great gamut, mental, moral, spiritual, among the inmates; by the fact that there is no essential qualitative difference between the men inside and the men outside a prison.

The approach to Sante Fe reminds me of Alexandria: lacework of canals, streams, ponds; and under the fronded green the white

roof-tops. We went into the seventeenth-century convent of San Francisco; its ceiling and doors of orangewood are carved to a design as flowering as the landside. The church is horizontal. Church Gothic in this pampa world turns horizontal. The heroic and the aspirant leave the church and go into the secular. Beyond a square of *naranjeros*, we see the huge, aspirant towers of the wheat elevators.

The town is still full of eighteenth-century houses, subtle and gracious. No grandeur. The modern buildings have dignity, but less fantasy and less energy than Rosario's. This is the head city of a rich province, some of whose ease has been naturally transformed into the pursuit, methodical, upright, never gnostic, never dionysian, of knowledge.

Follow any main artery out of town and you meet water. The river, like a little Amazon, spread into wide lakes, estuaries, inlets. On the marshes stand the hovels of the very poor: whole huts built of thatch, shanties of tin and scrap, as in Brazil or our own "Hoover-villes" of the Great Depression. This is a permanent aspect of Argentine life, where the broad margins of plenty are poverty. Due to the nature of its produce, Sante Fe is a province of small farms, not of great estates like Buenos Aires. Great herds of cattle and sheep require few men; on many of the large *estancias* to the south, *gauchos* are discharged when they marry. Such meat-production plants will be owned by a few landlords, as today; or collectively, tomorrow.

We visited many of the *chacras*. The standard of living is very high, probably not equalled except by the farmers of such states as New York and Pennsylvania. Here, too, the farmer tends to grumble and to be "agin the government." Many are German or Italian. When I suggested that their troubles were due to the war, they did not hide their contempt for Hitler and Mussolini. Few are fascist. Oddly enough, the leader of their great union, Piacenza of Rosario, has fascist tendencies; and he has not lost his influence on the pampa. (I remember Piacenza in the days when he devoutly followed Irigoyen and drank up my words about Walt Whitman. Whatever has happened to him, his daughter is sound. She is a leading labour radical in Rosario.)

Along the affluvial land, now golden and bare (the harvests are all in) beneath the sun of early winter, we come to Rincón, a forgotten creole village, smothered and mouldering under its live oaks and laden orange trees: houses and folk close to the mud and the verdure. I think of similar villages, smothered in azaleas, near Charleston, South Carolina, and Savannah. And along another road, Dr. Gollán, Rector of the University, and his wife show me the town where she was born: Esperanza, antiphone of Rincón. It is the town of Swiss colonists, neat, methodical, more colourless than Calvin.

Land of wide—if not deep contrasts.

At times, in the intensity of my labours, it is hard for me to realize where I am. In my own land, it is already summer! The streets are hot. My little girls return from school, sweating and dirty; and dream of going to camp. Here, there's a bleak grey sky like our November. At noon it begins to drizzle; by night it is raining. All night the wind howls, iron-grey, like a wolf from the south. With sun, the day hardens and freezes.

It is Sunday, the first day of rest that I have had in months. Two pale electric stoves skirmish with the heavy chill in my hotel room. I remain in bed to be warm; writing letters, taking notes. Later, I go to the *City Bar* and drink two *batidos de vermut con aperitif*. A good Hungarian gypsy band plays minor classics. As usual, many recognize me, but no one disturbs me. I read Ricardo Rojas' cruel and brave book on *Tierra del Fuego*: of the barbarous destruction of the Indians; of the incredible neglect of a rich land. I recall what my friends of the University have told me of poverty in the north of the Republic: Catamarca, Rioja, Los Andes, Tucumán. Sometimes the fat province of Buenos Aires appears like a huge stomach, ruining the body . . . limbs and head . . . of Argentina. Santa Fe is a bland town. The people are without intensity, except when they start explaining their own national faults. They are without intensity, because they have lost the old forms of passion: they wander in a symbolic pampa, seeking new forms, new channels.

The keynote here too is nostalgia. These cultured, articulate, physically robust men, these handsome women, feel themselves terribly remote from their roots, which are in Europe. They long for the culture-mother, the spirit-father. In Brazil there is a different poignance. There, the earth-mother holds the people perhaps too loving-closely. There, they long and struggle to emerge, but half-heartedly; the mother embrace is sweet. Here, the pampa embrace has been betrayal.

What wealth of variety in these people! What a symphony is America Hispania!

A cold wave has struck North Argentina. Clear up to Rio, where men die of exposure! An icy Patagonian wind! Snow and frost in Salta, Córdoba, Jujuy within the tropic. Here it is clear, freezing.

I have to go to Paraná, capital of the province of Entre Ríos. "Across the river," I am told; and one goes by ferry. "How long does it take?" "Two hours." It must, I decide, be an extremely slow ferry.

It turns out to be an extremely swift one. "Across the river," if the river is the Paraná, is not so simple. The *balsa* is the kind of motor-ferry that took me a couple of summers ago from Mackinaw across Lake Huron to Ontario. It races down a long canal, lined by low trees and occasional houses; it skirts the huge Isla Carabajal on the left, the Isla de Lynch on the right; shoots through the Bajada Grande; steams upstream and against great waves, in a mere

branch of the river about five miles wide; turns right past another island which reveals beyond it an expanse like a little sea and only now slows under the clay palisades and green escarpments of Entre Ríos into Paraná, which is, literally, "just across the river."

This province, between the Rivers Paraná to the west and Uruguay to the east, is not pampa. Its lands are undulant; its people are unlike the other Argentines. It is closer in temperament to the independent "province" beyond the eastward river. Entre Ríos has a record of rebelliousness. Here, the gaucho lasted longest. Here, José Hernández, after an unsuccessful revolution, in which he had fought as a private against Buenos Aires, retired to a dirty tavern-room and began his *Martín Fierro*. Here lived the hero Urquiza who conquered the bloody Rosas. The roads of Entre Ríos are among the worst in the Republic. This is not a *non sequitur*. Funds for roads come from Buenos Aires. Provinces that "conform" get the appropriations.

After lunch in a *comedor* where the temperature was not a degree above zero (Centigrade), and a glance at my icy room, heated (*verbigracias*) by a single electric stove, I went out into the cold sun to get warm. Reporters, photographers, students, professors, townsfolk, I received them all, that day, in the public square, the warmest spot in Paraná: on a bench under an iron Urquiza.

It is clear: this people has the habit of general ideas, of deep conceptions. It is the shape of their minds—a kind of rotundity. (Even their bores and imbeciles have it.) It does not mean, necessarily, that they think better than Americans or Englishmen, whose minds are made up largely of facts . . . fitted for facts. It means that they think of different things; have a different kind of mental and emotional interest.

Paraná, because of its poor roads and rail connections, is two days' distance from the Capital; although geographically, of course, it is as close to it as Santa Fe. I was invited to lecture in the town across the province, Concepción del Uruguay. The roads were impassable. It would have meant a long day's railway journey. But we did venture out into the rolling country. *Normal* country. The roads are a heavy black loam or clay. In the hollows, they are mire, almost lethal to the low-lying American cars. We got stuck in the mud several times and were pulled out by hilarious farmers whose high, slender-wheeled wagons were drawn by six or eight horses. We saw a few typical small ranches, nonetheless. And by a circuitous route, reached San Benito, a delightful village on a hill (the hill itself, after the pampa, was a delight).

Back across the labyrinthine river to Santa Fe. (I am cold, literally every moment. These folk are tougher than we. They keep their overcoats on, when they sit down to table, at home or in the restaurants, and think nothing of it.) A final meeting at the *Club Universitario*. I encounter the communists.

"You criticize the democracies," a passionate young man spoke up. "Blame them for just about everything bad that's happened. Find fault with the principles of progressive, liberals, radicals of all parties. You are lending comfort to the enemy. You mean well. But you're a subversive force and should be suppressed."

(This young man, doubtless, before Russia was attacked, shut up about the crimes of fascism and eloquently shouted that there was nothing to choose between British and German or American imperialisms.)

We were standing as close together as at a street-corner meeting; and it was cold in that Club room as a New York street in December. I asked the students if they had anything to say in answer. They did, admirably; revealing their grasp of the deeper issues in this conflict. Finally I said:

"When I was in Spain during the Civil War, we went to an advanced observation post on the top of the ridge that overlooks the Ebro. A big railroad yard across the river, in the hands of the fascists, was in full view of us. Behind us, under the ridge, our artillery was trying to shell the yard. The job of our officers was to telephone down to the artillery and help it direct its fire. Now suppose our shells had been aimed so badly that they were not only sparing the fascists but destroying our own side of the river. Would our report, saying just this, have been 'lending comfort to the enemy?'"

For years, I explained, I had been trying to point out in all possible detail why the fire of our forces . . . liberal and radical . . . was falling short; why it actually hurt our people and supplied the enemy with a good part of his power. The common notion that "wartime is different" is a delusion, based on the same kind of shallow vision that had made our aim poor all these years. *Our whole lifetime will be wartime*, I said, even if peace is signed tomorrow. Then we sat down to table for drinks and sandwiches. We all kept on our overcoats; but the top of my head was so cold that I put on my hat. I felt like an orthodox Jew.

By the time I leave Santa Fe, I am at home here. The servants in the hotel make family-like remarks about my lectures or some article in the papers. The waiters and post-office clerks say hello like my own people in the shops and post-office at Truro, Massachusetts. A group of young men accost me in the street and introduce themselves as exiles from Paraguay. They understand I may visit their country; they want to give me some facts. After listening to them I decide I prefer not to accept an invitation from so savage a military dictatorship. They ask to be photographed with me, and I consent. They send me, at a hotel, a long list of men whom I should see in Paraguay: good men. If I go there, and that paper is discovered, will there not be a round of executions?

I was right when I said to my Patagonian radio audience that population is Argentina's basic problem. (The idea is not mine: either Alberdi or Moreno—I forget which—said: *Gobernar es poblar*.)*) The country is on the horns of a tragic dilemma. Economically it does not need population, so long as its chief products are beef, leather, wheat and linseed. Culturally and politically it can overbalance the incubus of Buenos Aires only by filling its provinces with new men and women. This was what happened in the United States. Our rebirth began when the centres of population shifted from the seaboard to Ohio and westward.

The weather changed in Córdoba. Not the cold wave: it was ten below zero Centigrade all the time I was there. The *climate*.

Córdoba is the second oldest university in South America. At the turn of the century it overcame its strong churchly nature and turned radical. I recall the wonderful time I had when I lectured here in 1929. All the subtlety, all the profundity of the medieval disciplines were being directed to interpret Marx. From Córdoba sprang the famous *Reforma* that revolutionized the universities of the country, transforming them into autonomous, socially conscious bodies. Then, the usual collapse. The reaction, as everywhere, crawled back; in Córdoba with peculiar thoroughness, since the old reactionary roots were still there. The present Rector, Martínez, I was told, was a professed pro-nazi. Nevertheless he had written me a cordial note of invitation . . . perhaps too cordial? I looked forward to giving my two anti-fascists talks at Córdoba.

A new detail. On my arrival the leading progressive papers were as warm in their welcome, as prolific of space, as elsewhere. But the Catholic paper, *Los Principios*, one of the most important of the city, was silent. Not a word. Not a reporter.

Dr. Miravet and a horsy gentleman, the President of the Jockey Club, had come to Santa Fe to fetch me. We drove west through the one hundred and fifty miles of pampa, frozen tight as a drum, yet its verdure undiminished. We arrived only a few hours before my first lecture. A little past the proper time, Dr. Miravet, who was taking me to the University, was announced. I told the office I would be right down. The office said: "Dr. Miravet wishes to come up." Then I knew something was wrong.

Miravet and a man named Orgaz walked into the room and told me the Rector knew nothing of any date; nothing precise had been arranged. Unfortunately he was leaving town tomorrow. He would be back in five days. Could I wait, and on his return *discuss the lecture subjects with him*? They had hoped for a "more cultural subject."

I replied (by this time there were friendly reporters in the room): "It was hard to believe that Señor Reissig, a most methodical man,

* "To govern is to populate."

who had arranged my schedule, could date me in Córdoba without confirmation. Of course, mistakes did occur. But would they believe in Buenos Aires that it had been a mere mistake? I doubted it. The five days' wait was impossible, much as I should enjoy any discussion with the Rector. I had scheduled talks in other cities. As to the subjects: I had come here to give of my best; to talk on the most urgent matters. I would not dream of giving less to the students of Córdoba."

The envoys left, and I took my anger out into the city. My memory expected a sleepy colonial town. I found a crowded, rushing, dynamic city. The outlying parts, of ugly undistinguished brick, are dirty, dusty, disorderly . . . vital . . . like mill towns of New England. The centre throbs with traffic of men and women with plenty of money for the gay shops and the cabarets. Most of the architecture here is old. There are a few new structures, but far less than in Rosario or Santa Fe. The famous churches have the pampa squatness. (The Sierra de Córdoba rises from the pampa.)

The Cathedral is far less exuberant than similar churches in Peru or Mexico. Its lines are downward. The three portals are topped by a pediment on which stands a Christ; the Christ weighs downward. The whole façade has the rigour of one of the more difficult syllogisms of Aquinas. But the bell-towers, above and flanking this severity, have free grace with their bas-relief ornaments of flowers and of boys blowing horns. Behind the Christ is an exquisite porch in the air; and behind the porch a rugged, turbid, surging circular turret, fluted with filigrees, windows, decorations. Within, the Cathedral is a golden glory.

An extraordinary structure, eloquent of an extraordinary ingrained power in this people. Even more impressive is the Church of the Jesuits . . . its strong, organ-like, gold rotundity, its golden depth within a forbidding stone fastness.

The whole town has certain aspects of Spain . . . in decomposition. The main streets turbulent with fleshly life. Peculiarly repulsive priests slinking through the thoroughfares like vermin on an abandoned body. Most of the priests, by the way, are Spaniards. Argentines don't go in for priesthood. The town booms because it is a link between north and middle Argentina. It is a railroad centre, a middleman's town, a focus for manufacture and regional trade.

I got back to my hotel late; after listening to some very bad singing at a rowdy café: as bad as Broadway, but how much more vital! No sooner home than the phone called. A honeyed voice:

"Is this Señor Frank? This is the Secretariat of the University. Would five o'clock tomorrow afternoon be convenient for the first lecture? . . . Ah, good! The Señor Rector will be very glad to hear . . . The Señor Rector will be there. . . . And the title of the lecture? *Los Dos Caminos: Hacia la Derrota Humana*. . . . Perfectamente, Señor Frank. Perfectamente."

The Salon de Armas of the *Universidad de Córdoba* is an ancient and honourable hall pannelled in oak, with a low, looming, gold-fluted roof. Within the panels are portraits, black with age, of colonial Governors and Rectors, many in ecclesiastic robes. On the podium stand stiff chairs with backs at least eight feet high. In them, while I speak, sit the Rector (who evidently has forgotten about his journey) and a selection of professors. The hall is not large; holds perhaps three hundred and fifty or four hundred; and a good many of the seats are occupied by teachers of the university or officers of the province. Students line the panelled walls, and through the open side doors overflow into the patio, whose farther flank is the grey-stoned university chapel.

One of the younger professors, not the Rector, reads the customary introduction. At times, these little essays (not always so little) have embarrassed me; when they contain large quotations, culled in the press of other cities, from the very lecture I was about to give. All begins well; the audience is listening to me, intently. It is, I feel, in good part sceptical; in good part hostile. But it has a trained mind, and it follows. I have never spoken better the strict, rational line of my attack on the deepest roots of totalitarianism: the roots that treacherously interweave with those of almost all modern thinking, whether it calls itself left or right.

Suddenly, the chapel bells begin to toll. I go on. They toll loudly. I go on. I have held these cool but alert faces; now I feel their attention fatten and fade. They cannot follow, not with clarity. I stop speaking, and turn mutely to the Rector. The bells ring. The Rector lifts his bland smile to me, and says: "Proceed." I try to proceed. Now the bells clamour, almost drowning my words. I stop again.

"Is this part of the Deep War?" I shout, and put down my papers.

The audience hesitates; laughs. Then it applauds. The gentlemen on the podium sit as stiff as their high-backed chairs. I stand silently. At last the clangour ceases and I begin again. When I conclude, the audience stands and solidly applauds. Long. I have won them.

The second part of *Los Dos Caminos*: "Toward Human Destiny," which, by a strict analysis of human nature, I show to be democratic, is scheduled for Monday at the Córdoba Provincial Theatre. There will certainly be more room. The immense structure is government-owned.

I have lunch with José Agusti, director of *Noticias Gráficas* in Buenos Aires and of *Córdoba*, the town's leading afternoon paper, which has a larger sale than all the morning sheets combined. Agusti, whom I have seen frequently in Buenos Aires, is a delightful, subtle, none too scrupulous Catalan: the true successor in the field of Botana of *Crítica*. (If I had time, I should like to make thumbnail sketches of the big newspaper men of Buenos Aires: of Ezequiel

Paz of *La Prensa*, sedate, solid, honourable, hating the Government much as Winston Churchill hated the Chamberlains; and of his editorial chief, Adolfo Lanus, a veritable Lancelot, gentle and brave and strong, against the nazis; of Mucio Saenz Peña of *El Mundo*, boyish, pro-British, naïve and shrewd as a fox; of sensitive old-world Mitre of *La Nación*. . . .) Agusti came as an immigrant to New York; worked on the subway; drifted to Buenos Aires; landed in Córdoba, where he got a job as a printer's assistant on an almost defunct paper. With borrowed money he bought the liability and soon commanded the field. Then he invaded Buenos Aires. He keeps his family in Córdoba and commutes by plane. He loves Córdoba, where he got his start, and hates the Cordobese leaders. He told me about them, in his sunny home: about the stubborn, incessant, treacherous hostility of every vested group in the town:—Church, State, Land, Money. It sounded like Balzac or Ibsen. He was particularly venomous against the Church; while his charming wife shook her head and disagreed, and his charming daughter remained charmingly non-committal. More than once, here in Córdoba, I have thought of a church, stinking with black rot, that I once found in northern Spain . . . a symbol. And of the busy towns of southern France, during the Spanish Civil War: sensual, indifferent, *insouciantes*, while the fascists murdered their sister republic across the border. . . .

Whether it was accident, inefficiency, diabolic plan or all of them together: the enemy scored his first telling blow at that second Córdoba lecture.* The night was very cold: approximately seven above zero by our Fahrenheit reckoning. When I got to the theatre, I found it was unheated. It was one of those colossal affairs erected all over the world, from seventy to forty years ago. You know: two tiers of boxes, three balconies, and a "paraíso." Doubtless its somewhat worn plush seats had harboured the elegant bottoms of many elegant ladies and gentlemen when an opera or a world-famous virtuoso came to town. This night, as I came out from the wings, about half the seats were empty; the other half were occupied by brave and hardy warriors of the mind, huddled to their ears in their coats.

That stage had a Patagonian vastness, a Patagonian chill, and all the winds of the Antarctic. The man who introduced me came late and read his address, while the world shivered, with his coat collar up. Five of the eight sponsors, who sat on chairs behind me in their winter wools, retreated and vanished as I got up;—including

* I have not mentioned that in every town the pro-nazi paper, usually of no importance, attacked me; the Buenos Aires fascist sheets kept up their campaign of vilification; the sedate Catholic papers, in such cities as Santa Fe or Córdoba, alternated between ignoring me and discounting me in frigid editorials. The Rio papers published a fraudulent interview, cabled from Buenos Aires, in which I was quoted as saying horrors about Brazil. This caused so much trouble that the Brazilian Ambassador in Buenos Aires got in touch with me. I sent a denial by the United Press and the Associated Press, and all was well again.

the horsy gentleman who had called for me in Santa Fe. I put my overcoat on the seat; it seemed impossible to give a lecture in a greatcoat.

This second lecture of the series is the most arduous and complex I have ever given. It is not meant for a huge state theatre, even if warmed and packed to the rafters. It is a lecture for *students* in a students' amphitheatre. I suppose at least a thousand men and women were present; but they were lost in the great, cold, empty spaces. I had pampa before me. I had also—and I told them—"the best audience since I've been in Argentina. Those who have come to hear me out of curiosity or snobbishness are absent tonight. They would not brave this boreal air. I thank you."

How they listened! But after ten minutes the amplifiers failed. My voice suddenly was a wraith within the winds swirling from the galleries to my throat. I had to force my vocal cords, stiff from the chill, to reach the balconies, which were fairly crowded. Before I had finished I had to keep on repeating to myself: "You are a soldier." The following day I was in bed with no voice. And the day after, an engagement in Santiago del Estero!

ARGENTINA OF THE INCAS

Within its huge monotone, what human variety in Argentina! Example: Santa Fe, Córdoba, Santiago del Estero, all within a few hundred miles' circle.

The pampa, as it moves westward from the Province of Buenos Aires, grows less fertile. In the Gobierno de la Pampa and San Luis, it is hard land; not here, as eastward and in Uruguay, did a pair of cattle left to themselves multiply into millions. The famous Sierra de Córdoba, which is west of the city, is a continuation of the hard land south: it is a crumpled pampa. The mountains, unsensational and lovely, rise almost perpendicular from flatness. Their flanks and peakless tops are half bare; and snow is on them. There are no valleys. The low land is covered by thorn. The streams meander lazily, and on their banks are willows.

Lush air and sun, more than the not-lush land, come into the villages, into the whitewashed, one-story homes thatched with grass roofs. Animals and girls, many of them lovely, merge with the quiet men. An inward, ingrown population. With the defects of its virtues. A common crime in this world of crumpled pampa is the cohabitation of father and daughter. A Córdoban judge told me that fifty such cases in a year come to his court alone. And how many are hidden?

The thorn-covered wilds beyond the town hold other secrets. In a knotted thorn wood, friends took me to the house of one of the most remarkable of living engravers. The house, ample and open to the cold air, was occupied by a madman who built himself a solitary workshop in the shape of a huge champagne bottle, and a

cell below ground whose threshold is a gigantic plaster frog. I presume these details lowered the rent, making it accessible to one of America's few first-class artists. This young Argentine, Mauricio Lasansky, is a true descendant of Albrecht Dürer and Rembrandt; not in spirit, but in the ruthless perfection and elaboration of his craft. His work, modern and not without *surréaliste* influence, is profoundly American. There is a mystery here. In Lasansky's bodies, drawn with suffering, in his faces exacerbated by search, there is a strong family resemblance to the sculpture of the mulatto leper of Brazil, Aleijadinho. The solution must be sought, not in a pedantic study of technical influences, but in the huge, dynamic power of the hemisphere. That spirit can draw to close brotherhood individuals farther apart in time, space and blood than an eighteenth-century Negro Brazilian and a twentieth-century Jewish Argentine.

The Argentine Andes in the west wall of Patagonia (Neuquén, Rio Negro, Chubut, Santa Cruz) offer to the tourist glaciers, lakes and staggering summits whose splendour dwarfs the Alps. It is true that the nearest of these are farther from the big towns than Córdoba. But accessibility alone does not explain why the Argentines prefer the Córdobese crumpled pampa. The subtlety of these hills, their combined intimacy and vistas, are variations of the essential Argentine home. Variation of ourselves is what we love: variation perhaps stronger, purer, more free. . . .

Santiago del Estero with the thermometer steadily below zero Centigrade warmed me like a homecoming. Again I saw the marketplace with its deep Indian strain: the lovely peasant women squatting among their fruits and legumes. Again saw that gentle and fanatical and perhaps great archæologist, Emilo Wagner, who has devoted his life to the pre-Incaic culture of what he calls, for want of a better name, the Chaco-Santiagoueños. I handled his precious recent discoveries in ceramics, decorations, jewellery; saw prevalence of the serpent-woman and the bird symbols, practically identical in form and feeling with those of Troy, Egypt, Mexico. To Dr. Wagner this means a unitary culture, fanning probably from Atlantis, east to Africa, west to the Americas. It might, of course, mean a unitary human psychology, expressing itself in peoples without communication through identical symbols. Above all, here again I found my friend Bernardo Canal Feijóo, one of the rare Argentine men who, in character and depth, equal the best of Argentina's women. Lawyer, writer, social and cultural critic, Canal Feijóo has resisted all pressure to live in the Capital. He is in love with this Santiagueño world; if men like him left it, there would be less to love.

The Inca Empire, properly Tahuantín-suyo (the Incas were the family caste who ruled it) spread down as far as Santiago del Estero; brought its official language, *quechua*, the "Latin" of a realm which embraced what is now Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Southern Colombia, northern Chile and northern Argentina.

The Incas, like the Roman Cæsars, organized and disseminated cultures; created little. Except for the language still heard in the forests and farms, and still sung in the music, the Indian elements of Santiago are pre-Incaic.

In the town, the Indian note is strong. The men defend themselves from the cold, not with overcoats, but with shawls and ponchos. Almost I might imagine myself in Bolivia or Peru, but for the pervasive, soft pampa feeling. The women, singularly beautiful here and in Tucumán, remind me of Egypt . . . of Egyptian sculpture.

Santiago, a town of only seventy-five thousand, has its own virile cultural life. (The public at my lecture was not less alert than the best southward.) The province used to be rich, with four principal small towns strategically placed to organize the normal rural life. (This is the centre for *quebracho*, a wood so hard that it will break an axe: *quebra-hacha*.) In the 1870's an English-run railroad, aiming at Tucumán's sugar farther north, cut through the province, ignoring the four organic cities. Young men were drawn away; girls went into service. The province lost its economic integrity; became bitterly poor. A good part of the migrant workers whom I shall find in Tucumán, as exploited as the Joads, are Santiagueños. These workers have a poetic name: *golondrinas*, swallows.

Some deep spiritual core saved the province; and when it spoke its voice proved its part-Indian nature. Despite its economic dispersion, Santiago del Estero has not lost a quiet, wan integrity. I felt it in the paintings of Ramón Gomez Cornet: simple and subdued portraiture, singularly poignant, touched with pathos and a reserve of energy that has somewhat evaporated in the economic and the atmospheric dryness. But its best expression is that deep plain-song, *la vidala*, whose noble sorrowfulness fills every room where Santiagueños gather. The structure of *idala* owes much to the Gregorian chant; its language is usually quechua; as an æsthetic body, it is of Santiago and Argentina.

After the lecture, Canal Feijóo arranged a little party with dance and music. *Zamba*, *chacarera*, *gato*, *palito*, *vidala*.

The dances are distinguished by the clear exposition of the role of man and woman in the culture. The woman, gracious, quietly circling, never much moved, her gestures confined to the delicate wave of her kerchief, to the demure drawing-wide of her skirt, to the soft pace of her feet. The man swiftly and violently moving back and forth from her, with gallop-storms of foot, liquid, petric, horse-like, petulant and passionate. Three girls beautifully looked and acted their symbolic parts. One was fragile, one strong and overflowingly vital. All were deeply contained within the culture that holds them, tenderly, to its form. Their beauty was the perfection of their conforming.

We North Americans are the true primitives. In our incapacity to conceptualize, we are a new people. These boys and girls of

Santiago are the end of a process, perfect and perfected. Their beauty is almost an "animal norm." A fine-bred horse, too, is perfect. But I do not forget that Santiago, also, is the home of a Canal Feijóo, of a Ramón Cornet.

These two friends accompanied me by car to the northwest frontier of their province. We drove through a hard land of quebracho and algarroble trees, of huge and various cacti. Along the road we passed many *golondrinas* going to Tucumán for work. (The sugar *zafra*, the cutting of the cane, has begun. The fields and the mills will be full.) Horses and mules bore the women and children and household goods; the men walked. Occasionally an old cart creaked over the rutted road, piled high with chairs, stoves, bundles. Bernardo told me stories of the Indians; and mottoes of the hard land. I particularly liked an old Spanish tribute to the quebracho—and to woman: "*Quebracho de punta, y mujer de espaldas, métale carga!*" Only a poet would dare translate it.*

We crossed into Tucumán over a high bridge and a low river. I said farewell to my Santiagueño friends and in another car drove on with the little delegation who had come from Tucumán to meet me.

Santiago del Estero is still in my heart. When will I see it again? I see a wild field: quebrachos and algarrobles and espinillos in the distance; tough grass, cactus, the smell of a bleak, strong earth inured to the sun. And in the fore of this, a girl: wild black hair, black, great eyes in a round face, earth-hued. The body in its dirty, flimsy shift lyrically tense, and sweet—earth-sweet, earth-blooming. . . .

Now, the golden canefields around Tucumán; warm liquid gold under the winter-blue of the sky and within the minor greens and greys of trees. Chimneys of *ingenios*, the mills, rise from the gold and the green; and about them, within the fields, clustered houses, 'dobe and brick, the *colonias* of the workers. That is the matrix; its farthest edge the snow-clad Sierras: Aconquija, Calchaques, toward Catamarca; and northward toward Salta and the true Andean Cordillera Real, the Sierra de Medina. Beyond that, Chile's sinister and unspeakably beautiful desert of Atacama. . . . I focus my eyes, again, close. I see the people, the *zafra* workers, the *peladores de caña*. They are a dark race, dispossessed of this sweet soil; living in cold and neglect, huddled, harried, ill-fed, ignorant of their barest rights as human beings. A folk infinitely dolorous. A little of the water of human kindness, and they would flourish in sense and mind like the fields in which they toil. I see, in the city of Tucumán, another race of men, who have clothes, houses, food. They do not see the dispossessed a mile away. Nor do the dispossessed see them . . . as little as if the city of Tucumán were on another planet. Among the city-dwellers are several thousand

* "Quebracho post on end, woman on her back, will bear any burden."

university students. Do they see the *peladores*, the *golondrinas* who stay with them, fifty thousand, for the three cold months of the year?

I believe that when men of the city race . . . students, townsfolk, shall truly *see* the other race, and join them in love, there will be birth in Argentina.

Because of my "wounds" of Córdoba, I have time in Tucumán for only one lecture instead of the scheduled two, an evening with the students and a day in the fields with the workers. Judge Miguel Figueroa Román, in whose car I am driving, tells me of the usual luncheon at the Country Club, with Governor Critto of the province, the Rector of the University and the local literati. There will be the usual speeches, and I will be expected to reply "with a few words." Even to the point of rudeness, I decide to cut this part of my duties short. The good ones at the luncheon will know I've not gone on this journey to collect honours, but to learn. The vain ones don't matter. Figueroa Román is telling me of the statistical studies of the sugar workers under his direction at the University; not a detail of living and sex habits, language, religion, customs, ethnic origin, recreations, etc., etc., will remain unnoticed. We stop and visit the *peladores* in the field, whole families cutting the cane. We visit their homes. I have seen more degraded poverty: the ghetto slums of Poland, for instance (that was before Hitler!), where the Jews lived in pallid subcellars; or the London proletariat, who, despite their comparatively decent standard of living, are far more disintegrated. But the misery, the promiscuity, the desperate edges of absolute want in which these migrant *peladores* live is the more shameful because of the rich gold earth about them, and the sun of Argentina. And the more terrible because of their unconquered sweetness, their springlike intelligence.

They lodge in company houses. The lucky ones have two rooms to a family: one in which they all sleep, overflowing from the floor to the wet earth outside; the other a tiny kitchen with a brazier. There are no beds, no stoves; even in the comparatively prosperous homes of the permanent *ingenio* workers, I saw no stove. Some of the *colonias* are long, sordid structures, open on one side, with one windowless room per family. On the open side, within the overhanging roof, the cooking is done; not even on braziers, over small sticks of quebracho. And beyond are the mules and other animals. In the one room, perhaps ten feet square, a family with four or five children will live and sleep together, a few pallets of filthy straw on the earth for bedding. Here the parents must make love; here the mother must give birth; here half the infants die. A life that breeds death. And of course crime. Liquor and passion releases in this people . . . mild, reasonable . . . the buried resentment which resorts to the *cuchillo de caña*, the knife with which they cut the cane; or, more frequently, to the despair of sexual attacks by father on child, by brother on sister.

Follow the family out into the field. (They don't work every day.) Adults and children over twelve cut the cane. A beautiful unitary motion lifts the stalk from the soil, slices away the shoots and leaves, severs the sweet from the waste, and tosses it aside where the smaller children gather it into piles. This family, at this constant toil all day . . . tragic dance which reveals the grace within their poverty . . . will earn four or five pesos: a living wage for *one* person!

Under the dirt and the pallor, the men are strong; the women, while young, are lovely; the children luminous. A good folk: the true wealth of Argentina. . . . I talked with many of them. I explained to them their integral part in the wealth of their nation; and their need to organize. They understood. But they come, they go . . . scattered. Nevertheless, a few years past, they rose spontaneously and invaded the streets of Tucumán, sowing fear for the misery they had reaped. They won an increase of wage, which time has levelled down. They will march again.

From these scenes I raced to the luncheon. Found the Governor to be an interesting man; robust, stout, suave and shrewd like a peasant. He is a physician who got into Radical politics in the last years of Irigoyen. Good will, social conscience . . . up to a point. The safety point: beyond which you cannot go and be a successful politician. Not even if your name is Franklin Roosevelt.

I felt the "safety point" dangerously close, before I left Tucumán. Figueroa Román had told me enthusiastically of his researches into the conditions of the *peladores*, had gladly ciceroned me in my first visits. When he saw in my face my darkening response to this blasphemy against Man, he visibly cooled. My hours with these sorrowful sons (and yet, the sorrows largely in me; and this unconsciousness of theirs, this acceptance, the deepest element of their sorrowful condition) made my lecture that night on "The War Beneath the War" unusually poignant. I, now, in my turn, was exploiting these exploited ones, for an emotional return which I shared, cheaply, with my public. Was I innocent? Certainly, helpless. But perhaps other exploiters, too, are "helpless." I told my audience, who listened, as usual, in rapt silence, what I had seen in my hours with "the other race" outside the city. Suddenly, the unexpected happened. I spoke of their houses—"if you can call them houses." The huge crowd broke into sustained applause. In the front row sat the Governor and the Rector. They did not like it.

One last appointment, and my north tour is complete. I leave a late dinner before it is more than half over, for my usual informal meeting with the students. They have grouped themselves in the large hall of the Club, around and above a little table and a single chair, meant for me. Tiers of them: the front ones squatting on the floor, then in chairs, then sitting or standing on tables, finally perched on the windows. Every eye concentrically on me.

I tell them that I shall make them do the talking. They can hear

for themselves that I haven't much voice left after my lecture and the many conversations. That's the minor reason. The major one: I have come to learn, far more than to teach. I go into detail about what I have found in the sugar fields. Then I put my question: "You privileged ones; students of the University of Tucumán: How does this concern you? Why have you done nothing about it? What can you do? What will you do?"

The answers were extremely varied, and at times tended to be extremely long. (The girls were more terse than the young men.) A youth said: Nothing was done, or could be, because the students—from all over the country—were as disorganized as the *golondrinas*. A youth proposed: Well, why not start and *do* something about it? Here's an issue we can use to focus and organize us. A youth said: We students are here to study and pass our exams. We'd better mind our own business. A girl indignantly replied: The state of our fellow citizens *is* our business; whether we are studying medicine or commercial administration. A mature young man got up and said: Nothing is done, nothing will be done, because the loyalty of most of us students is with the exploiters. Whether we know it or not, we are *against* those workers. If we don't already belong to the middle class, we will when we get our degrees. This observation brought applause, and catcalls. A girl answered: We're going to put a stop to this archaic division into classes. Professional people can be workers, too; earning a decent return. They don't have to exploit other workers. A youth exclaimed: I'm studying pharmacy. It will help me if I raise the purchasing level of the poorest workers. It will help you future doctors, too, if poverty stops killing half the babies. A girl got up and began talking, soberly, quietly, as if she meant to talk long. She did talk long. Our guest, she said, had made it clear enough in his lectures and his books, that we had to choose. Either we believed democracy was possible, an integrated democracy; in which case poverty and ignorance everywhere were everybody's business. Or we believed that exploitation was inevitable. In which case, of course, the smart ones, the college students, would try to be among the fascist "wolves" and not the "sheep." Well, she had made her choice; and she was sure all her fellow students with whom she was on speaking terms had done the same. The wolves must go—and the sheep. In place of them, let there be human beings! Here was a cause crying for action. Right at our back door. She proposed that before this meeting adjourned something should be done. Wild applause. I stopped it, and asked: Well, what could be done? I inquired if the students had organized visits or research among the workers. I alluded to the kind of expeditions among the *moujiks* which the nineteenth-century Russian students undertook: the true harbinger of the Revolution. I suggested the need of study, of deliberate plans for achieving knowledge, before intelligent action could take place. The talk went on. Only talk. But good talk.

When I left, it was long past midnight. The streets of Tucumán were silent. Suddenly, they were filled with the happy shouts of the students. . . .

CHAPTER III

URUGUAYAN INTERLUDE

An hour's flight, northeast across the river, reveals the strangeness of Buenos Aires: its strange whiteness, its strange flatness, the strange dissolvedness in pampa, and in their own moods and senses, of its people. Montevideo, a solid, dignified town of about seven hundred thousand, is a more normal city; also a less original and potential. From the plane, within its berth of water, it looms determined and strong. It is determined and strong. Its atmosphere has more tang than Buenos Aires, but is still predominantly sweet, the salt sea is still minor beside the sea of continental rivers called Rio de la Plata. The town is built on the flanks and the back of a hill. Much of the old remains: arcaded squares, the lovely *Cabildo* or town hall, now the Foreign Office, where in 1808 was launched the first serious declaration of independence—from Spain, not from the United Provinces of La Plata: many squat, graceful colonial buildings with iron grilles and porches; smoke-mellow taverns like in Madrid and London, and utterly unlike anything in Buenos Aires. Through the central streets pushes a sturdy people, without the elegance of the *Porteños*.

A provincial city is one in which the quality of the country invades; this is why its "metropolitan air" seems to be an imitation. A metropolitan city is one whose own style excludes the style of the landside. In this sense Buenos Aires—and New York—are metropolitan; Montevideo—and Boston—are provincial. In the two genera, there are generic differences. The style of the metropolitan city may be predominantly industrial and commercial, as in London or New York; or it may be a refined transfiguration of the qualities of the country, as in the case of Paris and Buenos Aires. The country quality of the provincial city may be a mere formless diffusion of all its elements, as in Boston, where the village tones of New England, Ireland and Italy are jumbled together: or this ruling country quality may be itself formed, personal, stylized, which is the case of Montevideo. The difference between a provincial city like Montevideo and a metropolitan city like Buenos Aires lies therefore in the subtle predominance of landside or town in the ethos of their respective peoples. And this difference is one basic difference between Uruguay and Argentina. Argentina's vast lands have been conquered by their metropolis. Uruguay's modest land made a city for itself, a city which conserves the spirit of its land.

After the pampa, undulant Uruguay delights me, because it is normal. I realize the arduous originality of the pampa; the strain upon its people of this abstract earth that has no manageable contours. Even its mountains are pampa creased and broken; rising abrupt, shaking down the loam, standing sterile. And most of Patagonia is a high pampa; its hills are not mellow cradles of earth and green and water; but sudden eruptions.

Motoring with Minister Ubaldo Ramón Guerra and José Pedro Heguy Velasco (designated to help me by the Foreign Office which has declared me its guest), I relax within this sunny winter world which might be autumn Vermont or western New York, or France. La Paz . . . Las Piedras, where the Uruguayan gaucho hero, José Artigas, whipped the Spaniard, giving the government in Buenos Aires time to set itself up. Canalones, the sleepy, sturdy capital of a Department. Santa Lucia, lovely old city on a river, where we lunched *al fresco* under the poplars and willows: lunched as well as in the old days in Bourgogne. (Here, Rodó spent his summers: the author of *Ariel*, the famous book which consigned to the United States the role of Caliban.) Florida, where after many years of failure in getting along with Buenos Aires, Uruguay at last accepted, rather than declared, her independence. . . .

I am going to take it easy in Uruguay. I am invited to give three lectures; I shall give only one. And when the threat of receptions and dinners looms, I shall retreat. (My throat is still weak, but my conscience is easy: that one lecture in the Paraninfo of the University has been broadcast to the nation; the completely free and varied press has published detailed interviews in which I give my message; and soon, my important lectures will be accessible in book form.) Uruguay, perfect little land, smaller than the Argentine province of Buenos Aires and the Brazilian province of Rio Grande do Sul, which wedge her in from south and north, offers a superb chance for me to meditate on certain general Hispano-American problems. In her intensity and her simplicity, Uruguay is like a test-tube answer.

WHAT IS THE GAUCHO?

One is too apt to identify him entirely with the pampa. Uruguay is not pampa; Uruguay is the country in which gaucho traits and gaucho influence upon a country's ethos are most visible. Understand them, and a good deal of the infinitely complex history of this world becomes less clouded. For the classic gaucho of Argentina and Uruguay is strongly related to the *vaquero* of southern Brazil; to the cow-raising *sertanejo* of Brazil's vast hinterland, to the *llanero* of Venezuela. (The word gaucho is probably Portuguese.)

What then was the classic gaucho of Uruguay, let us say in the year 1800, when he was ripe to make history? He was of mixed blood, Spanish and Indian; and his Indian fathers were not of the highly cultured races of the mountains: Andes or Mexico, or of the

forest like the Guaranís of Paraguay and the Maya of Yucatan. They were savage plains-folk like the Indians of our prairies. The gaucho got along better with the Indians, although he did not sink to their level, than with the Spaniards who tried to rule him from the cities. He lived in a land still without fences, without codified laws, and without economic problems. The cattle and horses imported from Spain had multiplied by the millions; he took what he needed.

This age of the glory of the gaucho has been called "the Age of Leather," by Alberto Zum Felde, the Director of the National Library of Uruguay who quotes an old chronicle:

"Houses were constructed with leather at the founding of Montevideo. Leather made protective roofs, as in the tents of the Indians. Nails being scarce, wire unheard of, rope and cord undreamed, moistened leather served their purposes; leather was used as cables, as chisels, in all manner of joining and riveting. Doors and beds were of leather; you can see them still in the country. Doors of houses, trunks, canisters, sacks, baskets, were made of leather with the hair still on it. Similarly, fences for the gardens; bottles for wine (the old wineskins), yawl-sails, cranes, chairs, and of course all the harnesses and ornaments of horses."

To these might be added the hats of men and women, wagon tops, boats for crossing the rivers.

Nevertheless, since the animals were all half-wild, the gaucho's work was dangerous; he needed courage. He spoke a Spanish which even today is far richer on the pampa and in the Uruguayan plains than in the cities; he added to it Indian and Portuguese expressions. The base of his life was freedom; he lived by his own code, whose cornerstones were poetry and courage. Most of his fights were due to his unconscious need to display his courage. The other need was to improvise songs. The *payador*, the troubadour wandering from camp to camp with his guitar, was the true gaucho aristocrat. Family ties were loose; the children were raised within a loose matriarchy. The Church had contributed to his sense of values; but its theology did not touch him. Like the Guaraní Indians, the gaucho looked on monogamy as unfair to the many virgins.

About 1800, the inevitable had happened. The city, strong enough at last, sent out surveyors, lawyers, fence-builders, proprietors. When the gaucho became the servant of a particular ranch, he took his first step toward extinction. (Those who refused were called *matreros*: Killers and outlaws.) But the gaucho's culture was so strong that he survived in death. He produced great literature, like *Martín Fierro*. He produced great generals in the wars against the Spaniard, like Artigas. He produced the great anti-gaucho, Rosas, the dictator of Argentina who alone was able to subdue the gaucho anarchy of the provinces. He produced the Republic of Uruguay.

The modern political democracies have been the work of cities;

their stability resting on the docile conservatism and traditionalism of peasant and farmer. In a landside where the gaucho rules, these stable elements are missing. The gaucho spirit is independence, bravura, poetic fantasy, rebellion. Here is one cause of the constant revolutions in Ibero-America. The gaucho spirit is anarchy. And anarchy follows the personal *caudillo*. In other Ibero-American lands, where the Indian culture was high (Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, etc.) there is another reason for political instability. These Indian peasants have none of the Spanish-gaucho spirit. Like the peasant of Europe, the farmer of the United States, they are conservative; but *their* tradition does not make them conform to the regime of their city masters; it keeps them alien, resentful, hostile.

WHY SO MANY LITTLE COUNTRIES?

We Americans, like most members of the human race, do not realize the egocentricity of many of our most precious convictions. If we did, of course, the egocentricity would vanish. Because our Anglo-Saxon genius has built a culture upon political stability, we take our political stability—almost like physical health—as an axiomatic value. We are blind to the defects in some of its virtues: for instance, the docile narrow farmer mind in England and the United States, helping to make our institutions stable, has impoverished the emotional, intellectual and aesthetic content of our culture. And we are blind to the virtues in some of the defects of our neighbours: for instance, the ever-fermenting, ever-exploring and explosive mind of the South American landsman . . . gaucho, or Indian or Negro . . . helping to keep their institutions unstable, has deepened the consciousness and intuitions of their culture.

Another delusion of egocentricity: that a union of dependent states like ours argues superiority *per se* over a family of independent states. The advantages of union are obvious. And the disadvantages of disunion. But there are other measures besides the sheer mass weight of military, economic and political power. Measures more intimate, possibly more organic. They becloud the easy answers.

To begin with, *are* there so many Hispano-American republics? Let us confine ourselves to South America. It is a continent of over seven and a half million square miles, with a population probably as large as Europe's two hundred years ago. It holds ten independent nations. Europe, with less than half the space, holds *three times* as many nations.*

The countries of Europe, to a great degree, were normal independent growths during the centuries of the disintegration of the

* Here is my count of the legitimate European nations (of course Hitler would count them differently): Great Britain, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Russia.

Roman-Byzantine world, among people whose differences in geographic, economic and ethnic life differentiated them, giving them in most cases separate tongues. Against these centrifugal forces worked certain centripetal ones of integration in which politics and economics sometimes overrode deep ethnic differences. Without them, countries like France or Spain would themselves consist of a score of countries. Well, forces not identical (the world had advanced to a different state; language, for instance, had grown stable)—forces strictly analogous created the South American nations.

Argentina, for instance, was separated for four centuries from Chile by the Andes; and is still separated by the enormous, accumulated variations caused by race, climate and economy. Peru and Chile for instance: neighbours whose histories have been distinct for four hundred years and whose racial components, although both speak Spanish, are as different as their geographies. But let us take the case of Argentina and Uruguay. Here the differences are not extreme; in fact the similitudes are enormous. If a logic can be shown in Uruguay's independence, a new light may fall on the whole Ibero-American problem.

The province of Uruguay, between the River Uruguay on the west, the Rio de la Plata on the south, the ocean on the east and the Brazilian province of Rio Grande do Sul on the north, for three hundred years was an integral part of the Virreinato de las Provincias de la Plata. The metropolis was Buenos Aires, the natural port for all the other provinces: Buenos Aires itself, Santa Fe, Entre Ríos, Córdoba, San Luis, Mendoza, etc. Through Buenos Aires passed all the permitted exports to Spain, all the permitted imports from Spain. If you will look at the map, you will see the logic of this. The one exception was the province of Uruguay, which, lying east of the great rivers that flow into the Rio de la Plata, and close to the ocean, soon developed its own port, Montevideo.*

The Spaniards did not so intend it. Montevideo was to be purely a fort and garrison against the marauding Indians and against the Portuguese who claimed Uruguay as their "Provincia Cisplatina." Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Spaniards did what they could to keep Montevideo down, to discourage its growth as a city. For instance, Montevideo had no university. By sheer economic force, it grew; and the Portefios did not like it. For they lost to Montevideo the profit of much trade within the province of Uruguay; and of much opulent contraband with Britain. (All commerce except with Spain was forbidden throughout her colonies; nor could the colonies trade with one another. Thus did Spain's imperial system encourage separatism in the future republics.)

Came Napoleon's invasion of Spain, and the rebellion of the

* The origin of the name is Portuguese. "Monte vidi eu!" exclaimed the sailor. You can still see the mountain, with a charming fortress on its summit.

colonies. Montevideo declared its independence of the mother country and its solidarity with the United Provinces of La Plata, whose capital it acknowledged to be Buenos Aires. The force of the rebellion in Uruguay, as in Argentina, was gaucho. The armies were composed of these restless horsemen, anarchic and poetic, to whom the enemy was the city; and the city's boss the Spaniard. In Buenos Aires, however, there was another breed of city man: the creole. He too wanted independence from Spain, but he proposed that the gaucho should simply change masters: himself in place of the Spaniard. Outside the city of Buenos Aires, no one in the vast lands shared this notion. The gaucho countrymen envisaged a loose confederation of independent provinces—something even less centralized than our own states before the Constitution—in which the gaucho spirit could thrive. They called themselves the *Federales* and their great leader was José Gervasio Artigas. To him the other chieftains of the other provinces looked up, he was their natural leader, the first among equals; and to him was due the first victory, long before San Martín could form his army, against the Spaniards at Las Piedras, not thirty miles north of Montevideo. On the other side were the *Unitarios*, the intellectuals, the city men of Buenos Aires, who had read *The Federalist* as well as the French Physiocrats, and wanted a centralized republic. They had the historic forces on their side, not only the economic; and the vision of a hemisphere of strongly knit states. But it took them in Argentina the better part of half a century to win their "unitary nation." And it was not the intellectuals, not the democrats who did it; it was a gaucho caudillo from the province of Buenos Aires, the bloody and brilliant Juan Manuel de Rosas, who . . . crying *Death to the Unitarios*, united the nation as the Unitarios had wanted.

But I'm getting ahead of my story. In the early days, while Buenos Aires was still struggling for some kind of rudimentary order among the gaucho provinces, it came to recognize Artigas and Uruguay as the chief obstacle. Never once did Artigas or any other gaucho caudillo speak of his province as *la patria*; they simply wanted an impossible independence within an impossible union. The practical result was anarchy. Buenos Aires sent its wildest diplomat to Rio de Janeiro, and sold Uruguay "up the river." The Portuguese troops came down to claim their Cisplatine Province; Artigas, caught between two armies, was defeated and killed.

In less than ten years the Uruguayan gauchos had thrown the Portuguese out. They still looked upon themselves as part of the Confederation of La Plata and Buenos Aires, somewhat sourly, had to take them in, even though it meant war with Brazil. A new gaucho chief, Rivera, disciple of Artigas carried the impetus of the defeat of Brazil into a conquest of Misiones, a rich land that lies wedged between Brazil and Paraguay. Buenos Aires claimed it. Rivera said, No: let Misiones be a province, like the rest. The old wrangle began again. Finally Great Britain stopped it. She wanted

two ports, not one, to trade with on the Rio de la Plata. She could play one against the other. In those days, British commercialism was still in step with the growth of nations. (Not any more!) Britain's ministers in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro persuaded the two countries to accept Uruguay's independence. Even then, Uruguay was reluctant! She called and calls herself: *La Republica Oriental del Uruguay*. East of what? Only of Argentina. Her very name reveals her nostalgia and her awareness of ties with her great sister republic.

If we analyse these events, we find that the insoluble element was Uruguay's gaucho spirit. Unlike their fellows across the River Uruguay, the Uruguayans could not compromise with their own need of independence. The other provinces, with Buenos Aires as the one possible port for their produce, became parts of Argentina; and their independent, regional spirit gradually suffused and transfigured into the complex tissue of the modern state. No one can regret this. Argentina, because of these local "deaths," like those of our own states or of the old duchies and principalities of France, is today a nation potentially great in human qualities. But who can regret that Uruguay went her way? that her independence did not merge with that of the others, but has grown solid, strong, simple . . . adding a fresh note to the great symphony of hemisphere nations?

To me the great argument against the little countries is their multiplication of administrative, diplomatic and bureaucratic offices. So many separate departments of state, finance, police; so many legislatures, judiciaries, what not . . . *ad infinitum, ad nauseam*. Much of the argument would be answered in a socialized world: tariff frontiers would be erased; one monetary system would be established with international commissions to rationalize imports and exports; university degrees would be mutually accepted; legislatures and departments of state would find much of their work done by technical experts. The arguments in favour of small countries strike far deeper.

In a world which the machine has made inevitably collective for rational communication and production, we need—for organic health—active counter-bodies. We need unions, syndicates, nations, persons. The huge nation, with its megalopolitan centres, is the enemy of these. To take one instance: in the small country, the original and creative person emerges promptly. He is fought, of course, but he is known—as Socrates was in Athens, as Jesus in Palestine. He goes from his village to a capital which articulates his little country; not to the mass-production paradise, like New York or Hollywood, where all expression tends to a "lowest common denominator," which is reduced, by the elimination of all individual traits, to sheer inanity. Uruguay is not much larger than Entre Ríos, the Argentine province across the River Uruguay which so much resembles it. Compare the life of Paraná, the depleted capital

of the Entrerianos, with the pulsant life of Montevideo! And yet, although Montevideo holds to itself most of the talent of the land, much that is restless and hungers after metropolitan fare leaves it for Buenos Aires. Argentina's first significant dramatist, Florencio Sánchez, was a Uruguayan. So was the great Argentine story-writer, Horacio Quiroga. The arts and even the politics of America Hispana are full of such cases.

As I look over the little countries of South America, I find none whose tough personal life does not justify its independence.* There must be greater union. For purely functional reasons: for defence, for economy and communication, both material and of the mind. Let it be a union of countries which are like persons. The most practical resistance to the levelling process inherent in our machine-collectivist order, the best defence of both community and person, will be found in the small nation. And already America Hispana, as compared to ourselves, proves it.

Artigas, the son of a bourgeois family in Montevideo, who made himself a gaucho, was an unpractical man in the world of 1810; and that world, by its own logic, martyred him. The future was with him.

The gaucho spirit triumphed in Uruguay: created a country, not a great or deep one, perhaps, but one that has been rich in human values. Unlike Argentina, Uruguay fell victim neither to the landlordism of huge estates nor to the parasitism of a huge city. During the nineteenth century, its politics was stormy; revolutions were common; but they did not deeply disturb the march of the land in its intuitive order. From the start, there were two parties which instinctively expressed the folk. The *Colorados* were the party of advance, of innovation, of revolution; the *Blancos* were the party of tradition. When the wave of immigrants came in, these parties absorbed them with far more ease than in Argentina. The Italians largely became *Colorados*; the new Spaniards *Blancos*. Finally, in 1904, the *Colorados* produced a chief, who, without tears or the benefit of either a strong socialist or communist party, modernized the country. His name was José Batlle y Ordoñez. As President, he introduced an eight-hour law, compulsory insurance, labour-defence of children and women: all the minimum programme of the social democrats. Then he grew more daring. The gaucho spirit of the land still turned the Presidency into a cult of the caudillo. He proposed the abolition of the Presidency; in place of it there should be a popularly elected Executive College, some of whose members would be replaced each year. The gaucho country could not follow him in this too intellectual reform, and turned against him.

But a compromise got into the Constitution. The President remained with the Administrative Council to share and curb his powers; and the two majority parties, whatever their proportional

* A possible exception is discussed in Chapter VIII.

votes in the latest election, were represented in the Senate, each by fifteen members. In 1931 a strong man, Gabriel Terra, again became President. At once he clashed with his Administrative Council; in 1933, when it proved reactionary, he dissolved it and became, technically, dictator. But he had the people with him; and the reactionaries against him. A similar paradox developed this last year; President Alfredo Baldomir explained it to me.

Baldomir is a tall man; clear, strong, rather dry; not an eagle but a substantial servant of his people. Although he is a General, his profession is architecture; and he is proud of his work in the construction of extremely sensible workers' colonies in the industrial suburbs of the Capital. He received me in his home; the home of a prosperous bourgeois in a town that has never lost its country roots nor its country savour. I had a hard time questioning him: much harder than with most of the reporters in every town I had been in. Baldomir wanted to know my impressions; he interviewed me. And just before I left Montevideo, I got a message from him: Would I not write a candid statement for him of what Uruguay had taught me? (I complied; and without a word changed, my statement—which pointed out the danger, despite its good intentions, of the President's coup d'état—was published in the papers.)

But Baldomir did explain the facts of his coup d'état. The Conservatives—the *Blancos*—of recent years have become the Nationalist party. No, said Baldomir, he could not say they were fascist, or even pro-fascist. Not exactly. But you couldn't trust them. What was happening to conservatives all over the world? By rigid constitutional law, this minority party, being the second party of the land, had fifteen seats in the Senate: enough to block the will of the Colorados, the majority party, which was to align Uruguay openly with the United States and the democracies, by breaking with the Axis.

"To carry out the intention of our people, I had to break the Constitution—until the people could safely change it." Baldomir smiled as he said it; and in that modern study of a modern professional man I felt, like a strong breeze, the spirit of the gaucho.

A sensible folk, who do not hesitate to break their own rules, or to fight, when the impulse is strong. At the core, a gaucho folk; living within an order that is half reason, half intuition, who have not rationalized away their passions.

They experiment with their Constitution; lacking the impeccability of us Americans, they make mistakes. "Very well, we'll ignore our Constitution—until we find time to mend it." Baldomir explained to me that in November there would be a plebiscite and a new Constituent Assembly. The Senate and House would again be free Houses, with proportional representation. The elected President would have four Cabinet officers out of nine. Since the Chief himself has two votes, this would mean six to five for the majority party.

"If it doesn't work, we'll try something else. . . ."*

A snug land, not afraid of themselves, nor of their laws, nor of caudillos. Moved by æsthetic and intuitive needs, they still want a President who brings to his action something of the free stride of the horseman. If he gallops away from them, they'll get out their lassos and throw him.

Thirteen years ago I drove over this road on the same errand: to visit Uruguay's most famous poet, Juana de Ibarbourou. We speed along Pocitos, Montevideo's Copacabana: smooth beach, cool white masonry of villas, and an angry ocean. We climb a steep hill in Buceo, and stop at a tiny cottage that looks Swiss—except that at the bottom of this road is the roar of the sea. The last time, in the car with me was Alfonso Reyes, the Mexican poet. He was his country's Ambassador in Buenos Aires; and had met me in Montevideo to spend a day with me, and a night . . . as we sailed up the Rio de la Plata . . . before the Porteño whirlpool claimed us. I recall Juana: a wine-hued rose, just before the petals begin to droop. I wonder what the years have done to her. The same little bourgeois home, overstuffed with bad bric-a-brac: Japanese and Chinese ivories, mediocre paintings, plush chairs. Is it her husband's taste? her husband for whom she wrote the love poems that brought her consecration from all America Hispana? Here she has lived. Here I find her again, in deep mourning for that husband, recently dead. The same beautiful woman, outwardly soft and overripe, inwardly cool, remote, ruthless. Cold with the coldness of the passionate craftsman; and in her craft, the gemlike hand is the heart. In the United States a poetess of the stature of Juana would have ten thousand readers: the scattered minority who are not satisfied with the twice-hundred-times-told refrains of Edna St. Vincent Millay. In America Hispana, if Juana visited the remotest village of Lake Titicaca, the students would strew her path with flowers. But Juana has never travelled—not even to Buenos Aires! She has spent her life in this overfurnished cottage.

"I'm leaving it," she tells me. Her eyes give me the reason:—now that her husband is gone.

She tells Heguy Velasco to show me her new house on the way back. It is a nitident white villa, not quite completed, over the beach. As clean-cut as her hard-sculpted poems. I wonder if she'll write any more of them when she gets there.

It was in Zum Felde's admirable "Proceso Intelectual del Uruguay y Crítica de su Literatura," I believe, that I found this

* Since this was written, the elections and the vote on the new Constitution promised by the President have taken place; thereby proving the sincerity of Baldomir and the Chancellor Alberto Guani. The President Elect is Dr. Juan José Amezága, candidate of the liberal Colorado party. Alberto Guani, one of the most sensitive and intelligent statesmen that I have met in America, becomes Vice President.

statement: "Uruguay has produced no geniuses; only men and women with traits of genius." An interesting remark, that may perhaps hold for happy countries: countries whose social assimilation of the personal values of its folk is successful. Artigas, to his fellow gauchos, must have seemed just like them; only perhaps "half a head taller." Probably the same was true of his successors in the heart of the folk: Rivera, Flores, Batlle. And the same holds, I suspect, with a woman like Juana. True, her verse outshines the verse of a thousand poetesses in the twenty-one republics; but when you read it, you are listening without fanfare to a glory common as the sun.

Yet the little land is generous; it has other kinds of beauty. I think of another Uruguayan poetess, Blanca Luz Brum; blond as Juana is dark, romantic in her pæans to social revolution, as Juana is classical in her lines of love. Uruguay could not hold Blanca Luz. She blazed in Mexico; now, more subduedly, in Chile. Generalizations about Uruguay are dangerous. They are likely not to fit, as Uruguay failed to fit in the United Provinces of La Plata. . . .

CHAPTER IV ARGENTINE CAMPAIGN (CONCLUDED)

*Again, Buenos Aires — Patagonia—Tierra del Fuego —
A Sortie into Chile — Patagonian Oil — Last Days*

AGAIN, BUENOS AIRES

María Rosa is going to Washington; the Coordinator's Office in one of its more inspired moments has asked her to consult on Argentine affairs. On her way she will spend a month in Rio. With her usual gallant energy (María Rosa is a cripple; struck by infantile paralysis when a young girl), she has chosen the hard way to get there. Instead of flying or sailing, she will go to Posadas, capital of Misiones. There, while the train trudges on to Asunción along the Paraguay, she will board a little boat for three days through the jungle on the Alto Paraná. At some little Brazilian port whose name I have forgotten, she will proceed by train through the wide state of São Paulo. "Also," she says, shivering in the cold Buenos Aires July, "I want to be warm. I want to be too warm." I imagine her toasting on the deck of her little steamer, envying the alligators in the water. (Later, from Rio, María Rosa wrote me the truth: it was the coldest week's journey of her life. As they approached the Equator, the thermometer kept falling. The alligators in the Upper Paraná all wore winter overcoats. . . . Even

South Americans, you see, have conventional ideas about the weather. It is sometimes cold on the Amazon; and it is sometimes hot in Alaska.)

At least thirty friends are at the old wooden station of Chacarita to see María Rosa off. There's an old cemetery across the way, and an old iron grille to bar the steam cars from the street. And under the woodshed of the depot stand the old wooden cars marked Corrientes-Misiones-Asunción. The magic of those names; Corrientes is San Juan de Vera de las Siete Corrientes, founded by the alliance of Spaniards and Guaranís. Misiones refers, of course, to the Jesuit Missions. Not the soldiers of Spain, but the fathers of the Society of Jesus, finally conquered the proud and brilliant race who still periodically defy the continent from Paraguay.

The wood station and the scene are like nineteenth-century Russia. Flowers, baskets of fruit, piles of books, scarcely leave María Rosa and her attendant, Doña Pepa, room to sit. Tears flow as the little engine pipes and the wheels creak. Buenos Aires is a good deal emptier.

I drive back to Tota to that edge of the huge town where "everybody" lives. Even Chacarita is not yet really the heart of Buenos Aires. Miles in each direction, I don't know how many miles . . . monotonous white, low streets with women carrying market baskets, women in shawls, all smart as in Paris; with men all swaggering vainly to be smart, also like Paris; streets and periodic avenues of cafés aflame with the tango into the morning, and more streets; and finally the smart ones, like Santa Fe, where the elegance is truly Paris, and the lavishness exclusively Buenos Aires.

From the smart little Club Comega atop a skyscraper at the foot of the Avenida de Mayo, we look out over the empty docks and eat the exquisite food whose average in Buenos Aires is above that of Paris; as good as in Bourgne or Bordeaux of the old days.

. . . An intimate dinner at the home of a friend, Enrique Gil, a lawyer whose cleverness is taxed, trying to be on excellent terms at the same time with the United States, to which he is truly devoted, and to the present Argentine Government. The purpose of the dinner: to meet General Justo, who was once President and won't mind being President again; and has a chance, since he is both a conservative and in favour of breaking with the Axis. Justo is a rotund, soft old gentleman, whose softness deceives. So does his loquaciousness. He is truly shrewd and keen; but he disarms the fools by subtly appearing to be as fatuous as they. With great gusto he recounts his visit to Germany in 1938 and his telling President Lebrun and the Premier of France that war was coming in a twelve-month. Odd, this typical product of the too-rich pampa which has won control of it: unheroic, selfish, sinuous, capable of sudden flashes of outrageous daring.

Across the table is another pampa product: Victoria Ocampo.

Her politeness to General Justo is of the kind a sensitive man knows to be insulting. He is afraid of her. More lovable men than he have been afraid of Victoria; and that is her tragedy.

I have stayed away from the *élite* as much as I could on this journey. I have declined to lecture before smart organizations whose members openly favoured Franco and who invite me only because I have become *la mode*. But I go back to La Plata to speak on American literature before its Jockey Club. They've opened the doors of their absurdly ornate building, and many students mingle with the society members. After the lecture the students, out of place, linger in the vast hall, above and below the carved stairs. I feel almost like a deserter when I allow myself, with my secretary, to be spirited away into a little room where the Club's bosses, sandwiches and bottles of Scotch await us. The Jockey Club in a big Argentine city is not only a social centre for the leaders; it is a money-making institution. It runs the racing Hippodrome where the local mob comes every week to adore the horses and leave its money. The legal betting is in its hands. Wherefore it has plenty to spend on its "cultural activities," which are lavish and earnest. My lecture, for instance, has opened a series on modern literature, art and the arcana of the latest science. Here in the smoky room, the Scotch soon brings out the true grain; and I am a bit concerned for the studious sensibilities of Frida, the one girl present. She would be more at home at a philological debate. Well, this too will be part of her education. The men are high government functionaries, judges, lawyers, rich estancieros. Under their elegance, I feel their crass will; under their courtesy, a bravado that must vaguely point, far beyond their consciousness, to a hate and a fear. I prefer the class, as it is in my own country or in England: openly philistine and illiterate. These men have a veneer of culture that is more dangerous, because it is more than surface; the present has not been able to destroy all the past of sensibility that planted forests on the pampa and made the country.

They urge Frida and me to stay to dinner; the table is set for us and it is nine o'clock. I claim an engagement; and we hurry back to Buenos Aires.

In a backhand sort of way, the Córdoba combined assault of cold wave and cold theatre is helping me. My voice has never fully recovered; to conserve it, I am refusing to see a good many people whom I should need to see if a good excuse were lacking. The spare hours I give to my ancient delight: wandering around the city.

Yesterday the sun was springlike again. I visited, alone, La Boca, the old port. Here, Buenos Aires becomes a Mediterranean town, reminiscent of Marseille or Barcelona. And yet how different! The lushness is less intense; less perpendicular the rhythm. The

pampa-river, the fresh-water mildness, the fusion of the races into a monotone residual and quiet . . . are *porteño*. I watched the men unload oranges from their little craft that had the grace, but lacked the potent Amazonian bulk, of the boats in Belém. Many had sailed down the Paraguay, with the brutal Chaco on their right; down the Paraná eight hundred miles to Buenos Aires. They sang as they unloaded. Other boats brought the *yerba maté* from Misiones and Corrientes. In the dark forests, men die from overwork. There is blood on this deep herb, so much stronger, so much more primitive than tea. And now these lucky ones, the sailors, cross the quay, sit down in the taverns, play cards and sip coffee quietly and sadly. Among the boats on the Riachuela is a big grey Russian, its red flag against the mild blue of the Argentine sky and banner.

In a tavern of the Calle Nicochea, I lunch handsomely and in happy solitude, among the huge sides of beef hooked on the wall, and the barrels of beer. Melon with raw ham; broiled *pejerrey* with a wooden bowl of mixed salad; a flagon of *Rio Segundo*, the Cordobese beer which is the best in the Americas, and a huge baked apple in thick cream. The cost is three pesos and five centavos—less than a dollar! The quality is equal to the very best in old Paris.

I have found a free evening. Frida and I go to the play! It is by Argentina's leading living dramatist, a descendant of East European Jews, named Samuel Eichelbaum. It is called "Un Tal Servando Gómez" and it is *good*. It tells the story, in the colloquial dialect of the outer barrios, of a poor man who houses, loves and gives lifelong protection to a woman maltreated by her husband, and to their son. The drama, of course, hinges on the *mores* of a Catholic country where divorce is unknown to the people. (The rich get divorced in Uruguay.) The chief actor is a Spaniard, who admirably subdues his Spanish energy to the suave *porteño* rhythm. Characterization, writing, scene-sequence, are subtle and unemphatic. The play moves pampa-wise along, without visible climax. The relation of the son to his mother, to his father, and to the man who has brought him up, is drawn with a fine water-colour brush. In its sweet and modest truth, the play reminds me of Clifford Odets when Odets is good. But here is no Hollywood, no Broadway, to force fake climaxes upon a natural poet. Odets makes a lot more money and has a lot more fame. But Eichelbaum has the better end of the bargain.

Patagonia ahead. Trelew, Comodoro Rivadavia, Rio Gallegas, have summoned me down to lecture. Radio talks also have been arranged. The papers down there have been busy for weeks, reporting my activities in the civilized north, editorializing, raising funds for the expenses of my party. Reissig of the Colegio Libre is coming along. Here's a chance for him, the passionate organizer, to start branches of his college in the remote and empty south. His son goes too: part of his "education." Not many Argentines ever

see Patagonia. At the last moment, my secretary, Frida, falls ill, and I must go without her.

On the last day, Eduardo Mallea takes me to Harrod's on Florida Street. We select woollen underwear, a thick new suit, a blanket of Patagonian wool, for the antarctic expedition.

PATAGONIA . . . TIERRA DEL FUEGO

At 3.00 A.M., Buenos Aires is full of life. Cafés, bars, restaurants, are open; taxis and trucks on the Avenida de Mayo, and the newsboys carrying loads big as themselves of *La Prensa*, *El Mundo*. (*La Nación* appears a half hour later.) The bus of the *Aeroposta* glides swiftly from the centre to the huge outlying city. Buenos Aires is elegant unto the end—which is pampa. Kilometres of villas, large and small: we take an hour to thresh through this unintense, casual substance of the city. The airfield of the *Aeroposta* is the old one of the *Air-France*. Signs on the buildings are in French, recall the recent fall of that fair and too confident world. The chill, late hour—or is it early?—speaks also, tomblike, of France. Even the man who runs the embarkation is a Frenchman, remnant of the last regime. But the plane is German: an old Junker with fourteen seats, seven in a row. The two motors, warming up, flash their blue flame in the night. We rise swiftly. East of us, Buenos Aires, an immense blur in the black.

After the suburbs and straggling urban appendages, we fly for two long hours over a vast, black, unbroken pampa-sea, marred by no lights except occasional ranches that shine like remote buoys in an ocean. We see no hamlet, no town. Yet we are flying over Buenos Aires Province, the most populous of the Republic!

The illusion of sea persists. A black, frozen sea. By day, pampa loses its beauty from the air; its subtleties do not carry. But on foot or by plane, winter or summer, night freezes it to sea. When Bahía Blanca appears, it seems a huge cluster of burning rafts. The vibrance of the air above our motors makes the lights flicker like flames. Closer, the rafts become a fleet of ships, locked and burning together. The outlying foci of habitation are also vessels: the port, the granaries. So strong is the sense of sea, that when our motors soften and we descend, there is the emotion of danger. When we strike earth, there is amazement: a sudden, painful shift of consciousness. The sky to the east has opened like a bloody lesion. Between the sea (the real sea!) and the iron body of the pampa, the sun's blood sifts down, becomes grey, suffused twilight. (Dawn.)

Despite the early, frigid hour, there is a crowd of friends at the airport to sit with us, while we eat breakfast. Enrique Mallea; my three hosts who motored me from Mar del Plata; the newspapermen, photographers, poets. Mallea tells me that in his view the future of Bahía Blanca lies to the Patagonian south. As a mere shipping

centre for wheat, its great days, he says, are over. But if there were a *population* in Patagonia, what a market and industrial centre of supplies the town could be!

It is 8.30, and a grey morning. We are over the southwest panhandle of the province of Buenos Aires, approaching its southernmost town: Carmen de Patagones. This is bad pampa; greyer than the morning. An occasional little stream paints it with verdure. Then, houses and pasturing cattle. They graze as if they were plants, attached by their head to the earth. They look like little bushes of *ombu*.

Reflection: The Argentines are twice lost, at this tragic moment of transition. Lost in their pampa and in the world. The pampa distances dissolve them; the distance of their culture-world (Europe) suffuses them with a deep pathos. (Conscious, of course, only in the more conscious.) At the same time, they suffer from a strange solipsism, the other side of their remoteness. Intellectually, æsthetically, they are aware of other peoples; emotionally, they are not. In every town, in every walk of life, I have found it common for the Argentines to discuss their faults: weaknesses, vices, that are universal, as if they were exclusively of Argentina. Intellectually, they know better; yet they will bewray and flay themselves, as if *they* were the only immature, indolent, unconscious, politically imperfect, infidel, vulgar, emotional—in a word, the only normally *human* people on earth! They are the opposite of complacent. Intellectually and æsthetically conscious to an exacerbated degree, their illusion that they are worse than the rest of the world is almost Biblical. In the lax width of Pampa, all kinds of vices and self-indulgence grow huge. And Argentine faults are likely to be gargantuan. The Argentine bore is the supreme bore (how he has made me suffer!). The fatuous and arrogant man here is superlative. The sensitive man, also. . . .

And now at last I am flying low over true Patagonia! All my life I have dreamed of this bleak land; wanted to see it. Will I learn why? From Carmen de Patagones, we fly southwest over the Golfo de San Matías; over Valdez, a peninsula shaped like a trefoil, over sea again to Trelew. (Welsh name, Welsh founders.) A happy river-valley in the circumambient semi-waste of coarse brush, shrub, mud. The apple orchards and wheatfields broaden westward with irrigated valley until the barren tableland stops them. On the tableland, sheep: five hundred to the square league. We are too high to see them. Under the dark banked clouds, with lateral clearings, the land is iron; the sea is a blue, white-chafed, semi-fluid substance. Suddenly, snow. At first, it pockmarks the frustrate land; the winds have melted it; and the soil is mud. Now, larger residues of snow; a thin spread at last over the olive-brown world. The *meseta* westward mingles slowly into cloud and low mountain.

The incipient Andes. Eastward, faint pastels of blue and rose dapple the mist: sun and sea reflections. The sun is far, far north and beyond walls of cloud that break seldom. The day is twilight.

Halfway to Comodoro Rivadavia, the great oil centre at the bottom of Chubut, the snow thickens, yet even here cannot blanket the whole land. Tufts of soil, bristling with green, protrude. And westward, far distant under the wall of the Andes, there is a lay of verdure which must be trees! Here, no single tree. What a desolate land. Constantly windswept, so no tree can live. Bitter south wind of winter; carnal north winds of summer. And beyond, under the Andes, the loveliest mountain-lake country of the world: Bariloche. . . .

It is now 2.00 P.M.; we have been flying, with two brief stops, since 5.00 A.M. Halfway down Chubut, the snow thickened and submerged the tufted and terraced earth. We swooped very low and saw on the snow-banked road from Trelew to Comodoro Rivadavia an abandoned truck; later, a car more than half submerged. What has happened to the passengers? The distance between the two towns is over two hundred and fifty miles of waste. We circle around several times; find nothing, and continue south, keeping low. This part of Patagonia is supposed to have been the bed of a sea. Now, it is a maze of perfectly round hills that look indeed as if æons of moving water had worked them, like on a potter's wheel. Sunclad . . . there are bursts of sun like sudden blossoms . . . they look lovely; the circular and cylindrical maze becomes a pattern of a globe, sculpted by a *surréaliste* poet. At Comodoro Rivadavia, a whole delegation is there to meet us. We shall stop here on our way north. Now there is time only for a spot of lunch: soup, chicken, oranges . . . while the oil workers and engineers and town officials question me with the usual clumsily deep and hungry questions. There's about a yard of snow on the air field; under a pearl pale sky. The sun is clear is the north.

Reflection: I find I am worried about the cordiality of government officials, from Castillo and Rothe down. Somehow, I do not trust it. And this amazing freedom granted me! I have prepared two radio addresses to be given in Rio Gallegos and Comodoro Rivadavia. My audience will be Patagonia: which means workers in the oil fields, and sheepmen. I have not eschewed politics; I have not avoided names, not Hitler's, not Marx's. My talks are straight-from-the-shoulder explanations, in simple terms, accessible to workers, of the need of revolution; of the corruption of all our governments; of the dismal failure of the democracies. The texts of these talks have been submitted, as radio programmes must be, to the central supervising office. *There has been no objection!* What does it mean? Reissig says my hold on the Argentine public has become so solid that the government has resolved to make a virtue of necessity. Reissig, nobody's fool, is delighted. I wonder . . .

The waste continues; the snow is left north behind us. Patagonia here is hard, imporous black clay that holds the water in puddles . . . gigantic puddles. We soar again, having found no survivors of the truck and car. From where I look east over the ocean, a mile up, my glance, if it carried, would circumnavigate the globe, striking no earth till Chile, which, I presume, is that rising dimness westward. A pure globe of sea, east to west! And the sky all the way is water . . . one global cloud of it. The narrowing land is Santa Cruz: Sacred Cross, and well named. The human dwellers are crucified upon this surviving earth. *Man's* earth . . . all of it . . . bulges hugely northward. And dimly northward, the sun.

Not a trace of snow as we approach the tempered Tierra del Fuego. Not a tree. The hard grass is green in the spring; summer winds soon sear it. Sheep thrive on it; sheep only.

We arrived in Rio Gallegos, at the extreme south of the Gobernación de Santa Cruz, just north of the Straits of Magellan and of Tierra del Fuego (Latitude 52 S.) on a brilliant late afternoon, the sun casting colossal shadows, the sky sapphire, the earth saffron. Large delegation to meet us, including the Mayor and the Secretario de Gobernación. A long ride through the crisp twilight, the dew freezing as it falls, to the town. At first glance, it reminds me of towns in northern Montana or Alaska. Characterless houses in tin or cement or brick, enclosing the cold and the emptiness; stylizing them, weakly humanizing them. The hotel's public room is rather like a provincial one in Scotland, with dark woodwork and strong tea. And, of course, the whisky. Even as the Bible is the universal book, Scotch is the universal drink. Both deserve it.

My bedroom upstairs is ice-cold: a radiator which scarcely warms the hand that touches it. We sit in the public room; and the inhabitants foregather. They make a huge circle round our table; the women drink tea, the men drink whisky. Our host, a huge Gallego from Spain, heaps toast, cakes, scones before me. Little is said. These people are glad to see us. They don't have to say it. Mr. Elbourne, an English sheepman who looks too much like John Bull to be true, has been appointed by the city authorities to serve as my special host, since he speaks English, and it does not occur to the good Gallegans that I might speak Spanish. Mr. Elbourne has been in Patagonia forty years and in consequence has become a man without a language. His Spanish is incredibly bad—so bad I can scarcely understand it. And his English is like an old car that's all right until it misses—every ten or twenty yards. The strain is great; conversation with my English host is like a broken series of leaps and hurdles. We find we can drink Scotch with a more even rhythm.

I've no sooner got warm in the hotel public room, than I am taken away to the British Club. Here a few Englishman, officers, Spaniards and Government officials, gather silently about an enormous table.

Over my head are portraits of the King, the Queen and Winston Churchill. For the occasion Mr. Churchill has been draped in an American flag, which has fallen so that it looks somewhat like a soiled bib—appropriate for his cherubic countenance. Mr. Elbourne gets up and gives a toast in which I find my name sacrilegiously linked with the Sovereign's and the President's. Then everyone sits again in silence; and glasses are refilled.

After a bit of this, we go to the Spanish Club. And here the silence of Rio Gallegos comes to an end. Half the town is there. The waitresses are the marriageable girls; and strong, sweet lambs they are. The food is excellent. There are fiery speeches by the President of the Club, the Mayor and others. They warm the atmosphere; and, sufficiently thawed, I respond impromptu.

The Mayor turns out to be an extraordinary man. He is a physician, with one of those interminably long Basque names; and I'm ashamed to say I've forgotten it. But I shall not forget our tramps through the frozen streets of Rio Gallegos; and his keen remarks about this distant world which he has served with his love. He bore out what Ricardo Rojas has said about the governmental neglect of Argentina's southland.

"We have a harbour here which, with a little Federal aid, we could put into excellent condition. The aid never comes. The result is that costs of carriage from the shore to the waiting boat are so high, that we have lost all our trade to Chile."

We visited the territorial jail. And here, for the first time, I saw one of the legendary Indians of this south land: a giant Tehuelche, easily six foot six. And taciturn. He is in jail for killing his father. I would like to understand what happened. He looks at me, much as an elephant might; gently, not at all distressed by my words; but with no impulse to answer. I spoke also with a mad-eyed man who killed his wife, and whose delight and satisfaction sings in every word he utters. . . . Now, I lie in my bed, in my cold room, trying to keep warm, and trying to force myself to forget these stricken, confined brothers. . . .

I have given my radio talk, no word changed. (Audience: Patagonia and southern Chile: the towns and the sheep ranches.) Men come up to me in the street and silently shake my hand. A silent people. The lecture is in the local theatre, a funny affair, probably forty years old, with a pretty gallery of painted wood garlanding it all round like a toy opera house, and old-fashioned staggered seats in curving rows. I suppose, in proportion to the size of the town (four thousand), this is the largest audience I have had. They listened to me with utter attention. I felt I could have kept on for five hours: these sheepmen have endurance; and they are used to the wind and the rain. But I suspect they were more interested, actually, in the long address by one of their townsmen about Waldo Frank. I was amazed to hear anecdotes about myself that

I had almost forgotten, such as my visit long ago with Romain Rolland, on the shore of Lac Léman; and careful analyses of several of my books—and then a detailed exposition of the difference between my kind of writer and Stefan Zweig. I got the point. The rough-hewn and sensitive folk are interested in *me*. That's what they had me there for: to look at me, and to look again. Their local paper for weeks has been publishing extracts of my lectures and reprinting articles about me from the Buenos Aires press. If I'd just stood on the platform in silence they would have been satisfied. But doubtless it made it a bit easier for me to talk.

The chambermaid, a buxom lass from Chile—round face, round breasts, round hips (half the workers here, in town and on the ranches, come from Chile) pounds on my door and tells me it's 8.10 . . . time to get up. I dress, in the absolute dark, in the bitter cold; and we race to the airport. At nine, as we fly south again, the dawn breaks. The sea and the earth tinge with lavender. The northeast sky opens hard and sore to the day. At 9.40 the sun stands immense, tumescent, on the horizon. Over the Straits of Magellan, a heavy, solid ceiling of cloud at a thousand feet hides the sea and the earth. We climb above it. But at Bahía San Sebastián, suddenly the cloud stops. Directly under us is a dirty British boat, standing off for frozen mutton from Rio Grande de Tierra del Fuego. She is bleak and black, with a red gun on her helm and another on her bridge. Beyond lies the mythic land, treeless and brown. To the west and the southwest the unbroken snow-covered Cordillera. Southwest and south there are lower wooded mountains. And in their folds are forests and green valleys, sweet as Denmark. Still farther south, there are grasslands, good for sheep. And there too is the penitentiary town of Ishuaia.

Here on Tierra del Fuego lived the remarkable Indian nations of Ona and Yaguines, as tall as the Patagonian Tehuelche but culturally higher. They worshipped one God, and disliked war. They had a sensitive literature and were great fishermen and hunters. They wore fur over their nakedness and kept close to the fires which gave the island its name. The Spaniards destroyed them.

At Rio Grande we visited an immense packing house for frozen mutton. We saw the Chilean boat loading to bring its cargo to the waiting Englishman in Bahía San Sebastián. The land is bleak, hard, with the deep pathos of remoteness from the sun. Its symbol is the water that becomes ice. The sun may thaw it for a few hours; soon again it is ice.

We drove out to a sheep ranch for dinner: a hundred thousand acres, twenty-five thousand sheep. What sheep! A cross of merino and New Zealand, they seem literally to be all wool. The heavy massed wool covers their eyes; it is at least six inches thick. A ewe will yield eighteen pounds, a ram from twenty to twenty-four. The workers on this estancia were all Chilean. The superintendent was

English, brought up in Patagonia, with an Argentine-English wife. We dined well on fresh Patagonian mutton, with endless trimmings.

Author's pride: The autographing of books and albums is routine in South America. But this was different. I had been wandering alone over the ice and frozen mud on the docks of Rio Grande, watching the tough Chileans load the carcasses of mutton. Driving back, we saw a young man come out of one of the *frigorífico* buildings. He was wearing a lambskin jerkin; looked like a clerk or perhaps an engineer of a humble sort. He stopped our car and handed me a book. It was a copy, much worn, of a pirated edition of *Dawn in Russia*. As I signed it, this juncture of Russia, far north, with Tierra del Fuego, far south: this juncture of sympathy and understanding through my word, gave me a thrill of pleasure.

SORTIE TO CHILE

We drove rapidly over a fairly good dirt road, frozen slippery-white, south by southwest to the frontier. Through fields of brown, hard grass and sage with sheep, guanacos in herds, and ostriches. When the sheep see us coming they race toward us, dangerously, and across the road. Their brains cannot distinguish between the object of their fear and the way out, so they rush toward it. The ostriches are more intelligent; they scuttle off at sixty miles an hour. The guanacos, too proud to budge, watch us and chew their cud. Sudden truncated volcanoes, huge lays of lava on the fields, stand toward the north; and the sun stands over their rims which seem the nether rim of the whole world.

Our driver is a big Yugoslav from Punta Arenas, a Chilean and virtuoso at the wheel. He keeps the car dancing forward over the ruts and frozen puddles. At the frontier the courteous, silent *carabineros de Chile* invite us in for a copita of brandy. It is Chilean brandy, and good. The road worsens as the Straits of Magellan come close; we see the low and the high lands of Tierra del Fuego across the water; far off, the Cordillera.

The fields are more undulant; instead of volcanoes, strongly rising hills. Trees appear; the wind here is less violent and constant. The road becomes atrocious as the low sun thaws the *escarcha*—the frozen mud and dew. We follow the Straits, south by southwest, through a bleak, dun land behind the rim of the world which seems to begin up there, northward, over the hills with the sun.

We stop at a little ramshackle wooden house on piles above the water. Unpainted and dreary, it is the kind of "hotel" you would avoid in the United States if there were another chance to eat a hundred miles off. We sit down to a feast: cold pork with grated onion, soup, tender lamb cutlets and a noble bottle of *Santa Rita*. (In 1934 I spent a long and Bacchic week end at the *Vña* of Santa Rita, not far from Santiago. Its owner, who was my host, is Vicente

Huidobro, one of the best of Chile's poets.) Warmed by the generous wine, we again face the west wind blowing through the Straits from the Pacific. Our journey now is a hazardous, swift ploughing through mud. Innumerable flocks of wild geese rise from the road and the grass; wheel with much music into the sun that holds to the rim of the world, periodically vanishing in cloud. Hill and field, in the sun, are a pale gold translucence.

About every thirty miles we pass a sheep ranch. Solid buildings of stone and tin, red-roofed, orderly, give the appearance of industrial plants. Some of them are huge, with separate buildings and signs to mark their function: Workers' House, Office, Shearing, Library, Hospital, Foreman, Restaurant, etc.

We rise over a hill; swirl down (the *escarcha* freezing again) through the packing-town suburb of Rio Seco. The workers' dwellings are tin, and dismal. As night falls (3.45 Chilean time) we are in Punta Arenas.

This southernmost city of the world, founded as Magallanes in 1840 when the Chileans took the Straits, has a population of over forty thousand, with large quotas of Yugoslavs, Germans, Scandinavians and English. Huge public buildings, houses of stone, quaint half-timber shops and occasional two-story cottages with wood balcony and dormer windows, make it easy to imagine oneself in North England or Scotland. The same dour sky. The people, too, dark and phlegmatic, are not unlike the Celts of North Britain. The Chilean, half mountaineer, half mariner . . . slow, stocky, unimaginative, strong: one could go round the world and not find a race less like his Argentine neighbour and brother. The big blond women in the streets are Yugoslavs; the Mayor is a Yugoslav. As in Britain, you'll find the women behind the bar, serving strong drink and conserving order.

The Hotel Cosmos is famous. It is run by a German, Juan Toth and his wife, both of whom speak fluent English. It too . . . dark woodwork, spotless brown floors, cosy saloon bar with leather settles and the huge hearth burning . . . make me think of Britain. But I hear the newspapermen are coming. I had hoped for a holiday from all that, at this end of the world. A quick cup of tea with *mariscos*, and I escape into the city.

At the end of the dark block, I enter a *Bar Escandinavo* and find it full of Germans. The big blond Valkyrie who presides tells me she is German; but she is Chilean now. That's why she changed the name of her café: to show she is neutral. Two men half-seas over ask me to join them in a shot of *Schnapps* and I find it best to be friendly. But the atmosphere of the place is ugly (Later, in a confidential report prepared for me by the editor of the leading paper, I am told that the citizens of German descent in Magallanes are a hundred per cent pro-nazi.) The street now is enveloped in a night that is wet mist. But through it, I see the Southern Cross, just south of the high zenith. A crowd is waiting before a movie theatre.

The doors are not yet open for the "matinee" performance at 5.30. I look at the bill. The show is *Tarzan*. The expectant public is largely young girls and young men; students, clerks. And here, at 53.5 Parallel South, it is still *Tarzan*!

As I turn away in disgust, the loudspeaker radio of the café next door blares the evening news into the street. I hear that the brave Russians have fallen back again; and that I have arrived in Punta Arenas, where doubtless I will give at least one lecture. The Governor, I learn with the rest of the Austral world, will give a dinner in my honour. My first reaction is dismay. My plan for a few days off is foiled. Then I realize how unreasonable I am. I am ready to despise these isolated people because they flock to see *Tarzan*. But when something else shows up, and they want a chance at it, I think only of running away. Self-rebuked, I walk back to the hotel. Next morning the front page of the leading newspaper gives to a province, isolated and disturbed by its large German population, a long, faithful, extremely well-written interview in which I am permitted to explain the true nature of this war and why it makes Chile's neutrality a dangerous denial of everything the gallant country stands for.

The nearest railroad to Punta Arenas is at Puerto Montt, about nine hundred miles up a coast wild with innumerable islands and the invading sea. No air service of this broken, windswept earth is practicable even as far north as Valdivia. Regular communication between Punta Arenas and the rest of Chile and the world is by boat. And since the Panama Canal with one stroke wiped out more than half the traffic through the Straits, sailings have been largely confined to Chile's own sturdy little coastwise steamers. The town, therefore, lives in the twentieth century with eighteenth-century communications. Despite this, despite the desperate slump in business caused by the Canal and the War, it is a deeply personalized city.

I could not find hours enough for its docks. Across the Straits, I saw the dark mountains of Tierra del Fuego, the glaciers of Isla Dawson; and snow on the hills rimming the town. Little snow falls in the city. The climate is mild, as it is mild in all Patagonia. The vast sea-sweep tempers the frost, but not the wind. And the land's slenderness sharpens the pathos of lostness and of distance. The Chilean seaman is tough. He may have Yugoslav or German blood; but the type on the docks tends to the Basque . . . with a touch of Araucanian to give it tang. His ships are stocky, short and dirty like himself. And the salt of the Antarctic currents cures his words, as he discusses politics and world affairs from the standpoint of his party (every Chilean has a party): communist, socialist, radical—all friendly at least on the surface, since they form the United Front together.

The Chilean is cosy with his brother and with the stranger.

There's nothing cosy about the dwellings of the poor in Punta Arenas. I visited the Barrio Prat, a workers' district, about four one afternoon; that is, after dark. And dark were the dismal, unpaved streets of one-story tin houses set in the mud and the gloom. A light probably meant a saloon, or a greasy butcher (mutton is cheap). I found nothing like the dreadful abandon of Tucumán, where the exploiters' greed can leave literally everything to a warm sun. But there were plenty of families in two-room, cellar-like flats: a room for sleeping, a room for cooking, laundry and all the other woman's labour. The Municipality has built new cement dwellings, quite good, with toilets and modern kitchens. They've not yet made more than a dent on the town's industrial desolation. Chile, the most industrialized of South American countries, is perhaps the most politically advanced. Here I get my first poignant glimpse of what this means . . . how little! . . . in a country still economically enslaved to its own land-owners and to foreign capital.

A cold, damp climate. Winters of constant frost, summers that are never really warm. And the sovereign voters of the republic huddling near a kitchen stove. No margin of energy for peace or play of the mind. Alcohol of course, the poor man's magic. Also, rheumatism and tuberculosis.

I met the other end of the scale at the Governor's house. I recall some of the engagements of that vertiginous day: A visit from a group of hungry young men and women, *Los Amigos del U.S.S.R.*, Friends of the Soviet Union; a call from Colonel Cañas de Montalva, military chief of the Territory of Magallanes. He is a tall, slender, sensitive soldier with two passions: democracy and the history of Chile. At great length he explained to me the difference between Chile's popular army and Argentina's; and its resemblance to Mexico's. Then he went on to the great and unacknowledged role of Chile's national hero: Bernardo O'Higgins, who, he claims . . . not Bolívar, certainly not San Martín . . . put democracy into the War of Independence against Spain. A cocktail, since there was no time for a dinner, at the Centro Español Republicano. (This is an inevitable rite in every town and village.) A visit to the local industrial school where exercises with an American flavour had been hastily cooked up. A teacher of about twenty-five read a pedantic paper on nothing less than the history of the United States. A fat school boy of ten read a pedantic paper on Benjamin Franklin. Quality of the two contributions: about equal. The day was saved for me when a group of lads sang regional songs to the accompaniment of a guitar. Music is deep in this folk of Chile: so deep that often several political orations must be bailed out before you reach it. . . .

Governor Largos of the Territory of Magallanes, that includes Chile's half of Tierra del Fuego, lives in a house which, perhaps not oddly, has the same banal flavour in furnishings and decorations as the last Czar's "cottage" in Dverskoe Selo, preserved by the

Soviets as a museum of imperial bad taste; and as the big ranch-houses of Patagonia. In the ranch-houses reside the superintendent sheepmen; frequently British or part British. They are crude, semi-illiterate, with the peasant courtesy of rural England. The Governor of Magallanes does not resemble his house. As to manners and manner, he might be a diplomat of eighteenth-century Madrid in Paris.

Around the table sit the local dignitaries and their ladies: the Judge, the proprietor of the leading paper, the Territorial Secretary, Colonel Cañas, et al. The Colonel's lady tells me that Gabriela Mistral was her teacher for several years, here in Punta Arenas. She recalls the poetess with affection. At the time, she admits, she was afraid of the tall, dark, glowering spinster. For a few moments, the table talk is general on Gabriela. They are all proud of her. I wonder how many Governors of American territories—not to mention judges and local newspapermen—were proud in 1880 of Walt Whitman.

The dinner is delicious. The Governor has heard of my weakness for *mariscos* and has combed the sea for delicacies. I think of Russia: a remote provincial capital of the 1890's, in a novel of Tolstoi or Aksakov. I do not mean identity, of course. Not in the least. But here too, within nostalgia, distance and economic colonialism, there is the sense of destiny, of rootedness in a deep earth that is still virgin. These people are far more cultured than the Russians. They have within them (not behind them) the centuries of Spain and the living breath, never lost, of an American folk. It is the energy of the potential that one feels in the old Russian stories; even in those, like Gogol's, whose subject is the end of a decadent and exploiting class. Here too, in this last city of the world, I feel a beginning. Here, at the Governor's table; and there, in the workers' slum. I remember the words of a deep novelist of Chile, Mariano Latorre:

"Here is our folk, its elemental soul submerged in the dark night of the Indian and in the mysterious faith inherited from the conquistadores."*

PATAGONIAN OIL

The wind blows forever; the trees cannot live; the loam is stripped from the soil. The town, Comodoro Rivadavia, lies above the sea in a desert of barren hills and valleys. Years ago, a small community of fishermen and ranch-herders put up their huts, here, in the lee of a huge, bald hill. They trundled their water in barrels from the inland ranches, and did not like it. A particularly stubborn artesian-well man insisted that if he drove down deep enough he would strike sweet water. He drove down; and when the neighbours laughed at him, he drove down deeper. After several weeks of

* "Ahí está nuestro pueblo, cuya alma elemental se ahoga en la noche tenebrosa del indio y en la fe oscura, heredada de los conquistadores."

this they told him to go home and refused him more money. He borrowed money and drove deeper. At last he struck, not water, but "a dirty black liquid that smells like kerosene"; and telegraphed the news to Buenos Aires. The water no longer comes in barrels; it is piped from forty miles inland. The oil wells are everywhere: in the sea, on the shore, on the flanks and tops of hills, and behind them at least fifty miles inland . . . probably clear west to the Andes. The central and largest group are owned by the nation, run by the *Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales*, an autonomous body in the Department of Agriculture. Independent wells, farther out, belong to Shell, Standard Oil and the British-owned Argentine railways: each with its own settlement of workers.

The community totals twenty-five thousand. Five thousand live in the town itself: a frontier town with unpaved streets, muddy or dusty, saloons, third-class hotels and gaudy shops that display cheap finery at prices two-thirds higher than in Buenos Aires. Back from town, over a barren hill, the citizens have tried to make a park. They have planted trees and defended them from the wind; designed paths with decorative stones and flowers. The trees are like children stricken with infantile paralysis, in iron braces; the decorative rocks flourish better than the flowers. Three kilometres from town is the main works. It is called Kilometre Three; there are others called Kilometre Seven, Nine, Twenty-two, etc.; far along the coast and into the drear Patagonian meseta.

Kilómetro Tres is the real city. It has club buildings for engineers and workers; a street of cafés and movies, neat little homes for engineers and clerks. It has some new dormitories for bachelor workers with more than average wages. The modern architecture is good; like all that of the *Y.P.F.*, throughout the Republic, from its refineries to its gas stations. Red roofs, tiled walls with functional grace, stand against the desert. But most of the single men live in one-story tin shacks, divided into separate rooms, each with two beds. These rooms, flush with the cold earth, are unheated. Workers found with stoves, kerosene or electric, are discharged because of fire hazards. (Oil is everywhere.) The bachelors eat in long mess halls. The married workers, the minority, live better. Their attached houses, sheltered under brave shrubs, are of three or four rooms; they have stoves, and it is touching to see the gallant effort of the women to keep cheer and cleanliness within the flimsy walls. They have little gardens; vegetables, fowl, pigeons and canaries, in the dust and the mud. Compared with Tucumán or Punta Arenas, the level is almost luxury. The workers are well paid. They live, however, under a despotism that you can call benevolent if you will. They have athletic clubs, not unions. (These were smashed when Uriburú threw out Irigoyen.) Few can vote; for most of them are transients. The questioners and intellectuals . . . "trouble-makers" . . . are carefully weeded out. The single workers especially have a hard time in their bleak, exposed, unheated barracks.

I saw as much of them as I could, replacing my guides of the engineer or administration class with workers, casually met in their rooms, and soon friends. I was glad to find the heating regulations almost universally disregarded. When the guards came round, the men hide their stoves under beds. Radios were plentiful; social consciousness was strong; frequently angry.

Nevertheless, compared to the foreign-owned mines and fields that I have seen in Mexico and Chile, the atmosphere is pleasant. These workers, if rigidly bossed and patronized, are at least in the hands of their own people. There is no sullen slave darkness as in Tampico's oil fields of former days or the salitre deserts and copper mines of Chilean Atacama. And when I went out across the Patagonian waste to other fields, where the same class of men work at the same wage for international capital, I felt the difference. Not only are the houses of the *T.P.F.* less flimsy; the spirit in them has more resilience and sun. State capitalism, however rudimentary as an ideal, is better than colonialism.

But progress . . . progress back to what they had under Irigoyen . . . is slow. The workers are isolated in the desert, hundreds of miles south of Buenos Aires. The one way in is by boat; and immigration control is easy. The "troublemakers" can be shipped out at will. There is a garrison of troops conveniently near the town and the wells. Also there is a huge industrial school run by Salesian monks* who educate the boys well in the crafts—and, at least implicitly, in political submission.

I suspect, indeed, that Comodoro Rivadavia is a fair laboratory case of what economic socialization becomes, when it is imposed on a society whose organic values—spiritual, moral, intellectual, æsthetic—have not also been transformed. The workers are regimented; and held in economic and cultural impotence. The abyss between them and their immediate bosses, the engineers, is perfect. The engineers, intelligent, capable, sensitive, live in a state of nervous tension. They, too, are strictly under control—by the bureaucrats. I watched them, while Reissig tried to organize them for his *Colegio Libre*. Insecurity was in them; and courage in the few who said they would come in. Indeed, the workers are more free; if only because they have less to lose. There is no doubt: the price of property and power, in our world, is spiritual death. The religious who preached humility and poverty were simply preaching the easiest way to freedom.

The real bosses of this industrial community of twenty-five thousand are the bureaucrats. Until this modern social disease is analysed and brought under control, no social organism will thrive in a collective world. Bureaucracy . . . deadlier and more widespread than cancer.

* This order specializes in industrial education throughout all South America. Its technical work is good.

Ninety per cent of the workers are Argentines; largely from the northern, poor provinces: Rioja, Catamarca, Santiago del Estero, Corrientes, etc. Perhaps there is method in this selection; these northerners from the rainless farms—many with Indian blood—are easier to manage. The other ten per cent are mostly Slav: Czech, Bulgars, Serbs.

Most of them are bachelors; they must have women. Despite Latin logic, brothels are illegal in Argentina. A local citizen of Italian birth (we'll call him Señor Vermi), with the aid of the local police and other authorities, has solved the problem.

In an outlying street of the town there is a cabaret, called *La Bola de Oro*. (It advertises "relaxation" in all the workers' camps.) A good band plays constant tangos, and the women circulate from table to table. Drinks are priced high: glass of beer, one peso; bottle of beer, 2.20; shot of whisky, 3.00. Drinking is discouraged; so is dancing, although there is a diminutive dance floor. The men are here to meet a biological need; Señor and Señora Vermi are here to help them. If a girl sits at your table, you need not ask her to drink; not if you take her by the hand and lead her to the door. But let's not be in a hurry. Señor Vermi, I suspect, keeps in the background, as befits a captain of industry. But you can't miss *la patrona*. She is an efficient little woman, and unobtrusively she moves about, keeping an eye on the girls and the men. She might be a West End Avenue matron of New York; a bit more demurely dressed in her black gown, and decidedly less violently rouged. The girls are few, and carefully selected. Doubtless, Señor and Señora Vermi think they can do the selecting better than their clients. At the least sign of intoxication, a man is courteously ejected.

When I went in, I had noticed outside a row of limousines. They play an important part in Señor Vermi's highly rationalized system. As the man leaves the café with his girl, he steps into a limousine. *He cannot walk*. For the nominal sum of fifty centavos the pair are driven to the brothel, two blocks distant. This is a dismal structure, a windowless wall facing a dark street. It might be a gymnasium or a prison. Within the door there is a ticket office, which collects five pesos (a bit over a dollar): two for the room, three for the woman. The client then moves along to another official sitting at a table. This worthy assigns the room, hands out a number on a card, and notes on a long sheet the precise hour and minute. Beyond are two long corridors; the couple pass down to the designated door. After twenty minutes, an attendant knocks at the door; if the client does not come out within five minutes, he must pay extra. In the halls, there is a stove, but the rooms are unheated. Conspicuous over the head of the man who takes the money is a huge sign: VENEREAL DISEASES ARE DANGEROUS. IF YOU ARE INFECTED GO TO THE MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL FOR FREE TREATMENT.

When the couple leave, the man of course may walk away; the woman must take the limousine, that is always waiting, back to the *Bola de Oro*. Thus Señor Vermi, who thinks of everything, discourages clandestine meetings. With the same thoughtfulness, the girls are lodged and fed in his strictly supervised homes. They live two in a room; and do not even have to go to town for their shopping; the fineries come straight from the Buenos Aires boats into the discerning hands of *la patrona*. To make the system perfect, and to earn their share, the police see to it that no other café and no hotel in town provides competition.

In so remote a town, in a system so debased, where fornication is retailed like food in our own quick-lunch counters, one might expect to find a peculiarly debased type of woman. The truth is otherwise. Some of the girls were crude and ugly: the exceptions. Some were handsome; several had motherly faces. Only at close range could I see in them the acid of their lives. What mystery of ignorance and economic stress has brought them here! And yet, do they not have better patrons than their smart sisters in the metropolitan cafés who go to bed with the brokers? In this crowded, smoke-filled room, the men are *workers*: honest, simple, good as the earth. And I found here, as elsewhere, that it was not the pretty or dainty girls who were sought; but the mature, maternal women.

What a dangerous confusion in our attitude toward the prostitute! Surely, among the trades of the world, hers is one of the least dishonourable. She gives what she has, in full and tragic measure. There is more truth in her trade than in the transactions of most lawyers, business men, politicians, commercial artists and entertainers—not to mention their silky spouses. The stigma on the humble and earthy business of the whore is reasonable in a Platonic-Christian world whose values are ascetic; whose Pauline denial of the flesh and its pleasures justifies sex only within the dolorous sacrament of marriage. Many cultures, such as the Greek, the Babylonian, the Japanese, have admitted the whore among the respectable professions. We in the "advanced" West have lost utterly the Christian sense of sacrament in respect to marriage. We have re-admitted the flesh and its pleasures, not in their dionysian and tragic forms, but in mild and shallow saturnalia of "comfort." Yet we have the impudence to look on the whore as if we were Christians—although, of course, without the Christian tenderness and pity.

In the Ibero-American countries, most notably Brazil, there is a change from this. The prostitute benefits by a Christianity which, in becoming earthier, has remained more real. She is less degraded; she has a sense of the humane, if not cultural, duties of her trade. She is not like the Greek *Heteira*; not like the *Geisha* of Japan. But she is not like the gold-digger of the United States and of the modern European nations.

My lecture came at the beginning of a five-day visit to the oil fields. It was disappointing to me. In the comparatively small audience of about five hundred, there were few oil workers. Reissig told me that industrial workers in Argentine will not go as a body to a lecture not specifically politics, given under bourgeois auspices, priced one and a half pesos, and several miles away from where they live. The explanation did not satisfy me. That might be the rule, but I have broken plenty of precedents and rules on this journey. When I questioned my new friends in Kilómetro Tres, I got evasive answers.

The following day, I spoke on the radio. Now my worker friends told me that all the camps had listened and were enthusiastic. Over the radio, I dealt with the need of a new political party, "not non-Marxist by a long shot," but "with far deeper psychological awarenesses than orthodox Marxist doctrine admits." I said to my friends: "If the workers liked the radio talk, why the devil didn't they come to the lecture, where I went into the real meaning of these 'deeper awarenesses' and what their lack has done to our world?" Still the evasive answers.

Then Eusebio Zapata invited me . . . a bit hesitantly, as if he were afraid I might refuse . . . to his house for dinner.

Zapata is a big butcher's son from the nonconformist province of Entre Ríos. He earns six and a half pesos a day as a machinist; he is gentle, honest, sensitive as he is big; and he has been my guide on several of my expeditions to the privately owned oil camps. Although he has said nothing, I am sure that he is either a communist or a close fellow-traveller. And I have noted, all along, a strange conflict in his manner with me; as if he were torn between acceptance and refusal.

I thought I could explain this. Since my arrival in Buenos Aires the communist papers have said almost nothing about me. One fine day a pamphlet appeared, not an official document, but by a well-known party member, a physician (I am told, a good one) named Emilio Troise. The pamphlet's dozen or more pages prove that I am "practically a fascist." The proof hinges on these points: (1) I believe in intuition, fascist philosophers like Heidegger and Klages believe in intuition, *ergo* I am a fascist; (2) I oppose the dogmatic dialectical materialism of the communists, *ergo* I am a fascist and (3) in my Buenos Aires lectures (devoted exclusively to problems of inter-American relations) I sang no pæans of Russia, indeed barely mentioned Russia, *ergo* I am certainly a fascist. I had paid no attention to the puerile logic of this *medico*, which boils down to flagrant examples of the fallacy of the undistributed middle: "A cat has four legs, a horse has four legs, *ergo* a cat is a horse." But perhaps Zapata's earnest, doggedly seeking, unschooled mind has been confused by it?

That last Patagonian day was mild and smiling. Zapata called for us and led us up the great, bare hill that stands north of the town,

between it and Kilómetro Tres. The last part is so steep that rickety wood stairs scale it to a ridge where chickens scoot among straggling shrubs in the front yards of humble workers' houses. Zapata's wife, Marucha, led us into the kitchen. (Their house consists of a bedroom, a bathroom and a kitchen.) Marucha is the daughter of a Ukrainian who came with her to the oil fields, eighteen years ago, when she was three. She is pretty, keen-eyed, strong-breasted: a good mate for her good man. We dined well (an unbroken rule in Argentina, if one dines at all). There was soup of strong meat stock, the inevitable mutton with potatoes and lettuce, and a bowl of mandarins and pumpkins. Diffidently, with half words, Zapata let out the secret I had wanted.

The Communist Party in Buenos Aires had sent down orders that no member should attend my talk. This had affected few workers. Suddenly, a day or so before I arrived, came huge bundles of Troise's pamphlet; and were distributed in all the camps, efficiently and gratis. The workers accepted that I must be a fascist in disguise. On the day after my talk, however, it developed that the pamphlet had not been sent down and distributed by the communists; but by a small, rabid group of nationalists in Comodoro Rivadavia. A great murmur ran through the camps. What did this mean? The pamphlet was by a Communist Party member, and the pro-nazis were using it? When I talked over the air, every room that had a radio was crowded. And the general feeling: well, Zapata expressed it by inviting me to his house for dinner.

We went out on the ridge to drink *mate*. This heady herb is the Argentine equivalent of tea: and it is drawn through a metal tube from a small gourd, in which the *mate* is packed. Below us, the town, sturdy and shabby, stood above the conch-shaped Golfo de San Jorge: vast miles of sea, east and south, brilliant as an emerald in the sun. In a developed capitalist town, this whole magnificent ridge would belong to the rich. Here, good and humble men and women like the Zapatas can enjoy it.

After a couple of *mates*, Zapata went off with the Reissigs; I was alone with Marucha. Five minutes for another pour of boiling water over my *mate*, a last view of the sea, and I too will leave. Suddenly, Marucha began opening her mind to me. We talked long. When the sun faded and it got cold, we went into her house and kept on talking.

She told me of her father, a "discarded worker at fifty-six, crippled with rheumatism. . . . What has he got for his hard life of labour? Nothing." It was the indignity that her clear eyes blazed against. Injustice huge and universal. . . . "Except in Russia," she murmured.

She spoke of her life with her husband. "He is a good man," she said simply. It was the earth speaking; the earth accepting its own and giving in return sun and warm rain. But into this dreadful world of exploitation, she said, and her lips hardened, "I shall

bring no child!" I tried to show her the defeatism of this; how contrary to her own truth. She must accept life's tragedy, not avoid it. Only through acceptance, could she be creative. She knew this in her own life. Did it not make life good? Part of her life, part of her love with her man, might be a child. How could her mind with its critical rules decide against it?

She responded. She began to see what I meant by a *pattern* of will and mind that was—not life itself, but within life. Only if she knew this and accepted it humbly, could the pattern become and stay true. Her blue eyes opened wide, and then silence suffused us.

"It seems to me," she said, after a pause, "we are all parts of a whole."

I was amazed at her intuitive knowledge, while her mind crackled in the foreground with concrete rules that denied it. Our talk was living on two levels: the deep response in her to what I was suggesting about life, and the clear, strong, angry formulæ of her Marxist learning.

She said: "Fascism is the last, violent stage of capitalism in dissolution."

I said: "It is also the egoism and passion of frustrated men."

Less surely, she answered: "We'll change all that, when we change the system."

"Man made the system," I replied. "Man is older than the system, and will survive it. Egoism, passion, falsehood and frustration: they are older than any system. They too might survive it."

I was not defending the system, I explained. Of course it must go; conscious, organized men and women must throw it out. I was merely showing that the change, in order to be real . . . in order to grapple with the egoism and frustration . . . must be deep. She mused long. Half in reverie: "Nothing is final," she said. "Not even truth."

She was thinking of her comrades. Yes, they were narrow, she admitted. Because their lives were hard, and the fight was hard, and there was little time for thinking. Her clear eyes looked at me; she was rebuking, not her comrades, but me.

I knew she was right; I let her see that I knew. A couple of days before this daughter of the folk was ready to despise me, sure—because a Party member said so—I was a fascist. Now she was responding to my truth, because of a chance touch of warm words. She still had her system of simplicities, rigid and easily handled; and whenever she needed words, whenever she needed to act, she would fall back on the system. No use romanticizing what was happening here. If I had to sit in the sun on a warm afternoon with every worker, to make them know what I meant: know it as surely as they "knew" their simplified dogmas, I was a failure. But I must be patient even with myself. Yes, the inadequacy was mine. But somewhere in my world of ideas—if they were true—there must be the forms of language and of action to touch the

brothers and the sisters of this woman in every land of the world (many of them, as we talked, fighting and dying, murdering one another, across the lines of the Russian and German armies).

I walked down the rickety stairs to town. The emerald sea was a dark, dull death. But the hills were luminous arms, flaming toward the sun as it went down. It had been good talk. As I entered the town, which was a shadow heavy as stone, I realized that there, on the ridge, *I had been with the immediate future.*

LAST DAYS IN BUENOS AIRES

When I went for a last talk with President Castillo, I had already written my "Farewell to Argentina" but not sent it to the press. I was not sure I was going to send it. Reissig had suggested that my Farewell—my *Despedida*—be a last talk at the Colegio. There would be the usual crowds trying to get in, the usual full report in *La Nación*, etc., which somehow always removed the colour and bone from my words. No. Something else was needed.

My way of knowing was obscure. Why was *anything* else needed? Had I not done my job in Argentina? done it with success far beyond what my most optimistic friends foretold? I had delivered my message. There had been a few bungling attempts at first to bar me, but the rallying on my side of press and public had put a stop, to that. In my last radio talks and lectures, I had thrown over the thin "philosophical" disguise which deceived no one and brought the world crisis straight home to Argentina's dangerous situation.

"Since I am here in Argentina," I had said from Tucumán to the south, "I find I am afraid. *I am afraid Argentina is not afraid enough.*" And through my lectures, radio talks and the press, I had been heard, probably . . . certainly . . . by a larger audience in Argentina and all southern South America than had ever listened to a foreigner, or indeed to anyone not running for President. Why not go ahead, then, to the next job in Chile? Why not a pleasant and hopeful few words at the air field, while the photographers snapped me in the plane door, waving my hat? I knew I could not do it. I knew, if I did it, my laurels would be live coals on my head. Somehow, as things stood at this moment, I had had all the "success," and the real victory was with the fascists.

A final word needed to be said; nothing new, nothing I had not said already: a clear, concise restatement that would bring all my listeners together, from the students in Tucumán searching their relation with the *peladores*, to the workers and engineers of Patagonia's oil fields. What had to be said was unpleasant for Argentine ears; therefore *must* be said . . . not in Chile, not back home where it would be easy . . . but in Argentina. To leave it unsaid here, and to say it elsewhere, would be to betray every motive and every word of my journey.

I had come here to show that this is a world crisis, a vertical

war that will long outlast Hitler, that wipes out frontiers and makes the usual frontier courtesies frivolous and obscene. I had spoken in Argentina, not as a foreigner but as a fellow American; insisting that the man of any American republic who loves the destiny of our hemisphere is at home in every American republic. On these terms, I had been received, whole-heartedly, generously, by the people. To give them less than they had given me would be to betray them. Now my knowing became clearer. It was the people of Argentina mutely moving me; mutely commanding. It was the people who had dictated my final, still undelivered Message.

If I left without it, what was the practical situation? The Government in subtle ways had profited by my presence. They had let me talk. Did not that prove to the world that they were liberal, well-meaning? The nazi press kept screaming at me; and of late there had been more than a hint that the cure for me was violence. But who listened? The people listened to *me*. They had had a good time, listening. I had given them a good show, a drama with almost religious overtones. . . . But while I talked, the Nazi Embassy went on with its work. Masked as benevolent societies, gymnasium clubs, culture institutes, it had organized eighty thousand nazis in the country, each with a number, each trained like a soldier,* and these eighty thousand were in close touch with all the nationalists, all the reactionaries, all the servile and criminally minded of the country—and with similar groups in every Ibero-American country. Tons of propaganda were sent out from Buenos Aires to Chile, to Brazil, and northward. Every German business poured tribute—millions of pesos—into the Embassy coffers. And behind this subversive machine, biding its time, were the rulers of the republic; men close to the Casa Rosada, men close to Guillermo Rothe, Minister of Justice, and the Chancellor himself, Enrique Ruiz Guiñazú. These men had made their choice. Even with Hitler beaten, that choice would not change. *They* would go on fighting. For they knew that in a democratic world they were lost. Whatever happened in the United States, indeed whatever happened in Europe, they had a foothold in the richest and most advanced part of South America: a foothold from which in due time they intended to advance to Uruguay and Chile; to Brazil and northward. While the democrats . . . the fools . . . talked, as they had talked in Europe.

I don't think I reasoned it out as I have written it here. It was an organic feeling, an organic knowledge. Here, in Argentina, was a danger spot, a cancer against hemisphere solidarity, which of course means hemisphere democracy. Here, in Argentina, something must be done, to make not only the Argentines, but all

* The fifth column in Argentina is divided into brigades of ten; each ten has a leader who stands for the nine under him. The perfection of the detail network is carefully explained in *Campo Minado*, a book by Adolfo Lanus, national deputy and one of the editors of the conservative but honest newspaper, *La Prensa*. The book was immediately suppressed.

America Hispana, know. And oddly enough, this job of clarification had to be done by an American novelist and cultural critic who often insisted that he had never written a political page in his life. No one else could do it. No one else would be heard, if he tried.

Nevertheless, I put my *Despedida* back in my desk, and went to the Calle Juncal, where the President of the republic lives in a nineteenth-century house full of nineteenth-century furniture: huge China vases and the usual gold-framed paintings on the satin-covered walls.

He received me cordially, indeed affectionately, in a little salon heavy with half-faded flowers. He knew of my travels and wanted to hear all about them. Too bad I had not visited his province of Catamarca, where the scenery is gorgeous. He launched into a startlingly sensitive description (which no American jurist could equal) of sunset in the mountains of his native village. I cut through, as politely as I could, and told him my disquietude for Argentina.

Angustia was the word; and I said it applied to the people. Of course, said Dr. Castillo: in a world at war, how could people not feel *angustia*? I knew what *he* meant. Less than a year before, he had said: "Foreign problems must not disturb us, for the simple reason that Argentina is not, and cannot be, other than Argentina. Everything outside is a completely different question; a different ideal, a different interest." I demurred from the implications of his isolationism. What I felt in the people was a moral disquiet, a moral disease, precisely because they knew they *were* involved in the world conflict. The folk, I said, felt guilt, as if they were being betrayed in their birthright. Dr. Castillo assured me paternally that he knew his own people. They did not want war. As to Argentina's loyalty to the Pan-American ideal, I need not repine; he swore to me that his nation never would fail. I told him the issue was not whether Argentina wanted war, or should go to war. I thought not; I certainly hoped not. But that was being decided outside the Argentine frontiers. The *angustia* I spoke of referred to a lack of moral action; on a level at once deeper and more immediate than war. Argentina, through its position in America Hispana, had a responsibility of leadership. Here, the people felt they were failing; here was the cause of their deep disquiet. Castillo cited the non-belligerency immediately granted to the United States after Pearl Harbour. It's not enough, I said. Not clear enough, not strong enough; and not effective. I was thinking of the continental headquarters for fascism, a few blocks away, in the Nazi Embassy.

When I had been with Dr. Castillo an hour and a half, I had given to the President practically the entire contents not only of my Farewell, but also of my little book, *Chart for Rough Water*, which he promised to read.

"I always read for an hour," he told me, "after I go to bed."

"A messenger will bring the book before night."

"I shall study it," he promised.

I thought it time to leave. Not at all, said Dr. Castillo. "I have reserved the entire morning for you. And I want you to come again."

In the street I tried to buy the new issue, just out, of *Argentina Libre*, a loyal and intelligent weekly which had been fighting the War and isolationism since Spain's struggle. I learned the paper had just been suspended.* Why? It contained an article on "The Popular Front in Chile," which urged rupture with the Axis; by implication, the article criticized the policy of Castillo and therefore disobeyed the state of siege. The author of the article was José María Cantilo, Foreign Minister of the republic under Ortiz, Castillo's predecessor!

I went home and added a few lines to my Farewell.

The next morning I went to the offices of the Federación Latino-Americana, a labour organization with five million members throughout America Hispana. To meet me there were National Deputy Pérez Leiroz, Vice President of the Federación (its President is Vicente Lombardo Toledano of Mexico) and nine other prominent labour leaders of Buenos Aires, representing the railway workers, the printers, the building trades, the leather industry, the municipal workers, etc. We talked for a couple of hours; then we adjourned for lunch in a restaurant of the Calle Callao, famous for its *baby beef*, and went on talking.

We discussed the demoralized state of the country; the reasons; the dangers to all South America; and what could be done about it. They agreed that the state of seige, clamped on the country by Castillo on December 16, 1941, was the government's chief instrument for gradually restricting liberties and moving Argentina surely, and not slowly, toward a dictatorship with the nazis and vicious nationalist elements (many in the army) near the helm, and ready to act at the right moment.

"Why not smash the state of seige," I asked, "with a general strike?"

For an hour I listened to the reasons why a general strike could not be. . . . Only thirty-five per cent of labour in Buenos Aires was organized; in the provinces, far less. Certain industries like oil and sugar were not organized at all. The trade unions were torn by factions, sectionalism, politics. Many out of jealousy or fear truckled with the Government. The workers as a whole lacked confidence in themselves. They feared that an attempt at concerted action might bring the dictatorship out into the open.

"Don't the workers realize," I asked, "that the Government is afraid of them?"

"No," was the answer.

These were good men. (I had met as good in France and England, in 1935, and in 1937-8, when the crying need was to smash Chamberlain's "Non-Intervention Committee," which was murdering

* In January 1943, this magazine was finally suppressed.

Spain's Republic.) One, the representative of the building trades, was a communist and perhaps the finest, spiritually, of us all—but not the brightest. Others ranged from Socialist to Radical, which, in Argentina, means as little as a Democrat in our country. I tried desperately to bring the meeting to some concrete action. Only one could be agreed on. In a day or two, I was going to Chile. They proposed that I fly back for a giant mass meeting in Luna Park, in which I would be the principal speaker. Would the Government let me talk at a labour meeting? They answered: "Yes. Now, they will not dare stop you." I agreed; and at the same time agreed to return to Rosario, where a joint luncheon of students and workers in my honour had already been announced; the tickets printed.

I returned to my sunny, modern apartment in Calle Tucumán, more discouraged by my three hours with Labour than by my talk with Castillo. (I expected nothing much of Castillo.) I had shown my Farewell to Reissig and Eduardo Mallea. Mallea suggested the change of a word or two; I changed them. They were both cautious men; deep in the affairs of Argentina. They approved warmly.

Now, I called them; told them that my last doubts were gone. With few words they made me feel that they recognized the necessity of my message. We decided to give it first to the two great morning papers, *La Prensa* and *La Nación* (of which Mallea is literary editor). These had, not the greatest circulation, but the deepest influence of any newspapers in America Hispana. In the afternoon papers got the message first, they might play it up sensationally; I did not want this.

Mallea folded the manuscript in his pocket. "When should this be published?" he asked. "The day you leave?"

"No," I replied. "I want it published several days before I leave Argentina. If there is trouble, I can't let my enemies say that I got out of the country first."

Reissig intervened: "You have to fly to Mendoza tomorrow."

Mendoza is the city on the Argentine side of the Andes. From it, the planes hop to Santiago, Chile (when the weather permits) in ninety minutes.

I said: "Wasn't there some question of postponing my Mendoza lecture? Some difficulty about the theatre? Now that I'm coming back from Chile for that mass meeting and the Rosario affair, I could stop in Mendoza on my return."

Reissig went to the phone at once, and got long-distance. The postponement, he learned, would suit the Mendozans; give them more time to organize my reception.

So it was decided: my Farewell will be published tomorrow in *La Nación* and *La Prensa*. I shall spend the week-end quietly in town, glad of the chance to be alone. Monday, I fly straight to Chile.

Neither *La Prensa* nor *La Nación* (which had devoted at least a column, despite the newsprint paper shortage, to every talk I gave in Buenos Aires) published my Farewell. They were afraid. This

gave a clear field to the sensational afternoon press. All of the three principal ones conspicuously ran it. *Crítica*, in its afternoon edition, which goes to the entire country and has, as I have said, the largest circulation of any Latin-American paper, spread it over half its front page. In its last metropolitan edition, it moved the war news back to the front page and, without changes, placed the Farewell intact on page two.

Reissig, usually quiet and soft-spoken as a monk is supposed to be, was beside himself with delight. "It's much better this way! Now, the whole country has read it."

The next afternoon *El Pampero* came out with a front page, two-column, italicized editorial signed by Osés, the rat who directs the nazi sheet. The title was: *Adiós, Miserable Waldo Frank*. It outdid itself in its fury and abuse. It mourned that I had sneaked out of the country, thereby depriving Argentine patriots of their privilege and right to conduct me out with kicks aimed at unmentionable parts of my anatomy. And it concluded with a significant declaration: *That I was never coming back*.

The bond between *El Pampero* and the Nazi Embassy is like that between infant and mother. When the *El Pampero* editorial appeared, no one in the National Congress, no one in any of the leading papers, no one in the American Embassy, dreamed that the Foreign Office would take action against me. Only *El Pampero* knew it.

The following noon, our Embassy phoned me. The Foreign Office had informed them, and cabled to the Argentine Embassy in Washington to inform our State Department, that I was "*persona no grata*."

There is mist about the motives of Guinázú. According to usage, only an accredited government representative can be declared *persona no grata*. I had made it perfectly plain that I had no official position; that I spoke no official word. Every man in the street knew it. If a private citizen makes himself objectionable in a foreign country, the procedure is simple: the police visit him and quietly tell him to get out. But of course, the Foreign Office must have known that I was on the point of leaving. And this gave the clue to those in the best position to interpret what happened.

According to them: For a long time the German Embassy has been expressing its fury at my triumphal march through the land. I am undoubtedly crystallizing public opinion. The Argentine Government does not like it, either; but it does nothing. It is not a fascist government; it is a reactionary and craven camarilla with a very uncertain grip upon the country. It argues with itself and probably with Berlin, that it is smart to leave me alone. The people use me as a safety valve; the Government gains face as "liberal." The nazis do not understand this Latin *finesse*. As they see it, the best thing to do with an enemy is to knock him out. The nazi-inspired press fumes and rages; the nazis themselves dare do nothing. Comes the Farewell. Now, I have dotted the "i"s and

crossed the "t"s. The nazis in a fury rush to Guñazú and find him also fuming. This is really too much! After all the soft soap, all the courtesy I've been receiving. This Yankee is no gentleman. Berlin will be disgusted with the dear Argentine Aryans! But what to do? *Crítica* and the other leading papers are far too powerful to be suppressed. And if I am simply asked by police order to leave the country, Berlin won't know about it. What is needed is a "strong" gesture.

On unimpeachable authority, I learned that forty-eight hours later, the Argentine Government would gladly have paid a fortune for the chance to recall that gesture.

Not five minutes after the Embassy had informed me, and before the papers could print the news, the threatening messages over the phone began. Then the phone mysteriously went out of order. Within a couple of hours, it worked again; and again the threats. I had the porter up. He was a good man, a Czech named José, whom I trusted. I told him to let nobody up to my apartment about whom he had doubts. José, who with his wife cleaned my rooms, prepared my breakfasts and ran errands for me, had no illusions about the state of Argentina. We had talked of it, more than once. He came up several times with scurrilous notes; and kept out a number of delegations of "students" or "workers" who could not show their credentials.

Real ones did come, however. Their mood was of dismay. What could they do? They felt themselves threatened. They had all called meetings for early next week, at which resounding protests would be penned. And in the state of seige, who would print them? The Society of Argentine Authors and the *Círculo de la Prensa* of which two staunch democrats, Alfredo Lanus and Alberto Gerchunoff were the chief officers, were already in session.

That evening, I was alone. I had given my secretary the day off, before the news broke. There was much to do, now that I was not returning to Buenos Aires: many letters to write, many papers to file or destroy. Frida would be back to help me in the morning. Very late, José brought me a final threatening note. It had been delivered by a uniformed messenger of the aristocratic Jockey Club. The gentleman enclosed his card (later I gave it to the Judge and saw him turn pale): it contained obscene remarks about my country, my President, and myself. Toward midnight, the phone began ringing again. Threats and abuse in Spanish, German and English. Finally, when I answered, there would be no one. I rang off; again the phone. After a spell of this, I let the phone ring. It rang continuously for an hour. When I picked up the receiver, no reply. By now it was past two o'clock. I needed sleep. I laid the receiver on the table. I slept.

At about eight, José as usual came to prepare my breakfast in my little kitchen. While I drank my tea in bed, he told me of several suspicious delegations who had come late at night.

"I feel the enemy all around me," I said.

"He has been here all along," said José.

"At least now he's in the open."

I impressed on José the need of vigilance.

"Well," I laughed. "Democracy didn't do much to defend Czechoslovakia. Now, Czechoslovakia is defending democracy."

I had not slept long or well. I decided to work in bed.

A little before ten, the bell rang. I got up, put on my dressing gown and slippers, went through the living room, and opened the little sliding lattice in the door which gave a look into the hall. Five men were there, with José.

"It's the police," said José.

"Have you seen their badges?"

José said yes; and the man nearest the door, a short, dark fellow, showed me what looked like a badge. Anyway, José knew.

I asked: "What do you want?"

"We want to see if your passport's in order."

An altogether reasonable statement—in this unreasonable world. If I was leaving the country in a hurry, I must have my exit permit. In more ways than one, a visit from the police was to be expected—and welcome. When a man is declared *persona non grata*, it is customary for the government to see him safely out. I opened the door.

Four of the men came in; one remained in the hall with José. This struck me as strange. The four men were young, decently dressed, with warm coats, and hats over their low brows, as befits policemen. Possibly, if I had looked at their feet, I might have been suspicious. I have found it difficult, in many lands, to distinguish the special service police from fascists and other gangsters, by their *faces*. The men were glum and silent, all except the little leader, who did the talking and let a smile flicker on his not-unintelligent face. Hostility, also, was not strange; I had not studied the state of Argentina, these many weeks, without knowing the pro-fascism of its metropolitan police.

The night before, I had gone through my papers. An envelope containing passport material . . . doctor's certificates, photographs, etc., . . . I had placed in a drawer of the bureau next to my bed. And in the same envelope, on the principle that the traveller should not carry all his eggs in one basket, I had placed a folder of express checks and two five-hundred peso notes. The passport itself, with my wallet and most of my money, I placed in my coat pocket. My notebooks and other important papers were in plain view, on the living-room bookshelves.

When the "policemen" asked for my passport, I forgot where I had put it. I believed it still in the long envelope in the drawer near my bed. I went to it; the four men followed. I leaned down to open the drawer.

At that moment, I knew I had been struck on the base of the

brain. I say I knew, for I felt no pain. The blow, meant to floor me, probably to kill me, miscarried through some infinitesimal motion of my head. I roared aloud, and turned. Two of the men struck my head again, with pistols, the other two with their fists. Despite my own blows, they forced me back on the bed. I kept on striking as best I could, and screaming.

Suddenly they ran off, and one in his hurry left his hat behind him. (They took the envelope which, they were sure, had my passport.) I raced after them. In the hall, I saw them vanish with José, who all this time had been covered and kept silent by the gun of the fifth man. With bloody hands (my apartment was spattered with blood) I pounded on the door of the next apartment.

My message, and what followed, brought out the elements of Argentina, sharp and clear as in a spectrum.

There was the group, smallest of all, who stood by the Government and the five "patriots." In secluded café corners, in school yards, above all in elegant *salons*, they nodded and rejoiced. There was the considerable group of good Argentines whose national susceptibilities had been hurt; and who preferred not to look further into the event or themselves. They decided I might have chosen my words more tactfully;—and by what right did I, a foreigner, have to speak at all? These were the natural cowards who must not be blamed; any more than we blame rabbits for being rabbits. Close to them were the pallid liberals, who whispered: "Of course, what he said is the truth. Of course, it *had* to be said." And who trembled, and tacitly decided that *they* would say nothing; scurrying away into evasive horror at their Government—and what's the world coming to!

The intellectuals were horrified, ashamed, and angry. Many pleadingly asked me by letter if I was sure that my assailants had been Argentines. They could not believe it. They had been taken by surprise all along. They had never *quite* accepted the report of their own mind: *that this is war*, war without frontiers, war ruthless and to the death. Now, they had to know the fascizing nature of their own government and its sinister, immediate connection with the kind of violence they read about in Europe. Yet, even now, they found it hard to understand; and proved it by dwelling on the "cowardice" of the attack. What nonsense! In war, anything is fair. In war it is great generalship to advance under camouflage or cover (in this case, the borrowed police badges) and to attack your foe, five to one. The nazis, here as everywhere, still had the advantage of *acting* on the principle of the universal war, even while the intellectuals were busy proving that the war exists.

The people, without ratiocination, with sure, instant intuition knew that the physical attack on me was an integral consequence of the government action. It knew what kind of government it had; it knew the sinister implications; it knew that what I had said

needed to be said, and that my motive had been love of Argentina. In every possible way, it dissociated itself from its government; and expressed solidarity with me.

The provincial press, throughout the country, with great courage published my Message—often with editorials far more outspoken than those of *La Prensa* and *La Nación*. In every town where they were organized groups of men and women, they convened and found words for their feelings. The sanatorium to which I had been taken* was soon besieged. Hundreds upon hundreds of men and women came in person; if they had cards they left them. Letters and telegrams poured in. Many were from individuals, high and humble. But most were collective messages: from clubs, labour unions, organizations of teachers, professional men, writers, groups of women, provincial legislative bodies. When the messages contained specific reference to the government, they were refused by the government telegraph, or censored. The stress, therefore, in the open or published messages that I received, was upon the physical attack. But always there was a phrase to make it clear that the senders knew the attack to have been symbolic of the deep and encompassing danger.

Soon messages poured in from the other Hispano-American countries. From little Uruguay alone came hundreds. From Chile, Brazil, Peru—north to Costa Rica, whose President cabled a personal message; and of course from Mexico. Lombardo's Federation, speaking for five million workers, cabled not only to me but to President Castillo, demanding action. The women of Buenos Aires and Rosario went into the streets with stickers and throw-aways, saying: "Waldo Frank is the friend of the people." Several of the women were arrested.

The other side was not idle. Threatening phone messages came constantly to the sanatorium; indeed, with suspicious constancy. Probably a limited group, organized perfectly, in the nazi way, phoned in periodical, rotating order; their businesslike system making up for their small numbers.

Among my first visitors at the sanatorium were the three men . . . a judge, a penologist, and an editor . . . who knew best the fascist corrosion in the police and government of Argentina. They told me: "The police could pick up your assailants in ten hours. The police will make a great noise. The police will do nothing."

* Sanatorio de la Pequeña Compañía de María.

CHAPTER V

CHILE

*Vaulting the Andes — Santiago — Meditation and Proposal
— "German" Chile*

VAULTING THE ANDES

I left Buenos Aires sooner than I should have: my head still bandaged, my legs shaky. The Sanatorio de la Pequeña Compañía de María was like an armed camp, with guards below and on my floor. They kept out the friendly crowds, and the foes. But with the whole country and continent concerned, there were too many visitors I needed to see or wanted to see, or, because of their political importance, could not avoid seeing. I had to escape from my friends. But I could not steal away to an *estancia*; the guards would have gone with me. Many of my friends had been threatened. Victoria Ocampo had three policemen stationed in her house in San Isidro. One day she came into my hospital room, flung herself in a chair and with her girlish passionateness announced: "I've turned the guards out. I can't bear those faces. I prefer the risk of the fascists." Fondly, I figured that sedate, undemonstrative Chile was the place for me to rest in. There was another motive for going soon. One cause for the attack had doubtless been to prevent my visit to Chile. The Argentine Government was sorely afraid that Chile might break with the Axis and leave Argentina in unpleasant isolation. Word came to me that Guíñazú's son had flown to Santiago. It was rumoured that Argentina was offering her neighbour oil and other products. I was in the midst of a battle; I had to go on. . . .

On the plane was Adolfo Frei Montalva, head of the Chilean *Falange*, the deceptively named left-wing Catholic Party, which works against the fascists with the United Front (Radicals, Socialists, Communists). Frei, tall, gentle, with deep grey eyes, had been one of many Chilean visitors at the hospital; another had been Colonel Marmaduke Grove, President of Chile's socialist party. Frei is a friend of Gabriela Mistral; a disciple of Jacques Maritain. I learned only later that Gabriela had written him five letters, urging him to accompany me to Chile: not to entrust me to the protection of the police. He had come all the way to Buenos Aires, kept track of my plans, pulled wires for a place on my plane—and told me not a word.

But winter was in the Andes; it might not be so simple to leave Argentina.

We stopped at Mendoza. The same large crowd to greet me: government officials, newspaper men, students. We sat around a long table in the airport waiting room and drank coffee and had

good talk. The Mendoza papers had defied the state of siege. Not only had they published my Farewell and my final explanatory words (featured also by *La Prensa* and *La Nación* of Buenos Aires which had not dared publish my first message); they also ran editorials. I gave them an interview on the need of every generation to conquer freedom anew. Freedom was not a commodity or property to be conquered once and then bequeathed to one's heirs. The papers headlined my words. Argentina was far, indeed, from being a fascist-controlled country!

The Andes were in storm. Planes from Buenos Aires had been piling up travellers for Santiago in Mendoza for the better part of a week; the hotels were overcrowded. Word came to us that we were going to try to get across despite the bad weather.

We spiraled up the huge wall of the Pre-Cordillera—the mighty mountains over Mendoza's pampa which serve as base for the real giants. In the North Pass, low and heavy snow clouds blocked us. We veered and sought the South Pass through the great bastion. Our windows were so cold that heavy frost formed on the inside. I found myself thinking of Gabriela (I did not then know of her communications with Frei.) Long since, I had compared Mistral to the Andes. In her prose, in her verse, there is a plastic power, sheer, simple, lofty, which is mountainous. But the essential genius of this woman, in her art and her life, is tenderness—although disguised (as much by woman diffidence as by art) in monolith form. The Andean metaphor proves to be false. Only *human* strength can be tender. . . . The white mountains stand idle and indifferent within the clouds that stop us. The valleys are dark. The heights have the angry luminance of a world alien to men, hostile to men. On the other side of our plane, the flat somnolence of Argentina dims horizonless into sky.

For two hours, going up seventeen thousand feet, we tried to get through. We had to return to Mendoza.

At the airport, the Chief of Police in uniform and the Chief of Secret Police in mufti. Cordially (different from the recent cordiality of the Buenos Aires police), and diffidently, they inform me that I must submit to being guarded while in Mendoza; otherwise, I am at liberty.

Frei goes with me in the Chief's car; and we arrange a system of varying pass-words, when he knocks at my door. He will announce himself as a Philosopher of his Church: from Maritain to Aquinas, changing the name each time, in case he is overheard. The first man to visit me is the *Ministro de Gobierno*, a son of Czechoslovak immigrants named Beck. He apologizes for the absence of the Governor in Buenos Aires. A car is at my disposal, he says; and all Mendoza is "at my orders." He reminds me that the provincial legislature of Mendoza has voted its protest (like many others). He does everything he can to insinuate that I am *persona muy grata*, and he hopes I shall be held up long in Mendoza. Next comes a

delegation of Deputies and Senators to invite me to a luncheon in my honour at Villavicencio, a near-by spa in the Andes. I decline all invitations. But Frei and I, with the police behind (I will get used to that, before the end of my journey) take a walk through town.

Mendoza is the commercial centre of a rich agricultural land; its wines are the best of Argentina, only less good than Chile's; and recently its oil wells have been developed. Like Córdoba, its energy is perpendicular. Although it stands on the pampa, the Andes is almost overhead, and it is not a pampa city. Its main street—as in all Argentine towns called San Martín—is noisy and crowded; the shops are inelegant but lavish. Its cafés are pulsant with men drinking coffee as they make their deals.

Next day, at about three, the blizzard blows away, and we hurry to the airport. Pilot Gardner invites me into his cabin, and shares his oxygen tube with me. Swiftly, we climb the Pre-Cordillera which, east and west, stands like a mighty matrix from which the highest mountains flash: torrents of immensity.

Our little ship seeks a narrow passage within the tempest of rock, mobile as angry ocean, and noses slowly into it. Beneath us the valley is vast snow. The earth-waves rise in ruddy rock, in glaciers. On our right, close, Aconcagua . . . four miles of perpendicular ice and mass . . . looms over us. We creep along, winding with the pass while the torn earth tumults.

The terror of earth's living might, and of man's fragility; and of man's eminence! For our eyes see and our minds span this telluric hurricane. We are not dwarfed, yet the tragedy of our frail greatness becomes palpable.

Here is indeed a barrier between nations; it would be hard to conceive a more inevitable, a more permanent. The plane, the radio, the telephone, have broken it. But it prevailed for four centuries to fix the individual traits of Argentina and Chile. Now if the two peoples, strongly personalized, mature, they can grow and work together.

Yet the Andes is not only frontier for both Chile and Argentina; for Chile it is also the constant inward presence. Argentina turns her back on the Andes; lets her eyes flow, with her rivers and her pampa, eastward to the sea. But the Andes is forever within the marrow of Chile's folk who toil in it and live by it; is forever within the eyes of her poets and her statesmen who, aspiring to the Atlantic, must scale it. Our pass curves into the western Pre-Cordillera. At once, the whole central valley of the long land is before us: the narrow belt of green, the maritime range (hills at this height), and the Pacific.

The Andes is more than the modeller of difference between the nations; it is also the symbol. From the beginning of the Conquest, a different class of men went to the two lands; met different kinds

of Indians; were transformed by different conditions. The pampa Indian of Argentina was fluid as water; easily vanquished and absorbed by the gaucho. The Araucana of Chile were so tough that they held off the Incas north of the River Maule; and discouraged Pizarro, the wily conqueror of Peru, from risking the conquest of Chile. (He tried to dissuade Valdivia, who disregarded his chief's warning and died there.)

The men who came down, after Valdivia, were largely Basques; tough as the Araucana and, in their matter-of-fact minds, not unlike them. To get to Chile's central valley from Peru (the thin green land about Santiago which was all of Chile to be settled until the nineteenth century), they had to cross some of the worst desert in the world: Tacna, Tarapacá and Atacama; or they had to sail down against the Antarctic currents. Mariners and mountaineers, they became, from their initial differences, as distinct from the Argentines and the men who remained in Peru, as Norwegians are distinct from Norman Frenchmen. Chile's arid north was settled only when its nitrate and copper became useful to the industrial world; and then by Chileans from the south, who invaded it and finally annexed it (the War of the Pacific) from Bolivia and Peru. Chile's cold forest lands south of Concepción were "la frontera" with the Araucana, until less than a century ago. The Indians still dwell there in their *rucas*, and the valley of Cautín is still called La Frontera. A mere seven and a half per cent of Chile's land is arable; the rest is desert, forest, sheep pasture; and the frame of it all, mountain, sea and earthquake.

The clay in this hard wheel, within this cruel hand, must have been good. For Chile is strong and deep among the nations. Like her land, she is a folk of contrasts. The Chilean is far less clever, smooth or brilliant than the majority of his Hispanic brothers. His mind runs to the pragmatic; he is not given to sensuousness nor to vast concepts. Yet Chile's poets are among the best of the hemisphere: Pablo Neruda, Vicente Huidobro, and of course Mistral. Chile's novelists, Mariano Latorre, Pedro Prado, María Luisa Bombal, reach distinction in so far as they are poets. Manuel Rojas, storyteller, the pedestrian Sherwood Anderson of the Andes, has made poetry of utter matter-of-factness—of sheer prosiness.* But if you examine the extremely diverse work of such writers (my choice of names has been casual), you will find that the base is always an intimate scrutiny of detail; never a grandiose vista. The mountains here have shut down the horizons. The common literary notes of America Hispana, with its Catholic background, are sensuous, continental, cosmic. Not of Chile. Her vision touches the universal only through fidelity to the immediate and the minute.

* Rojas is another example of the cultural osmosis of Ibero-American countries. Born in Argentina but living his whole life in Chile, he is Chilean in his temperament and his art.

Chile on the map looks like an earthworm. The earthworm reaches, roughly, from 17.5 to 56 degrees south: over two thousand miles, and over a third longer than the greatest length of the United States from the extreme north of Maine to the Florida Keys. At its southernmost, the worm gives a sharp turn eastward into the Atlantic. Only two South American countries touch both oceans: Colombia and Chile. This land, whose geography has been characterized by Subercaseaux, the Chilean writer, as "insane," is the most industrialized Latin American country. Politically it is the most developed. Every Chilean belongs to a party; every Chilean worker belongs to a union.

The largest party is the Radicales, who correspond to our Socialists but include much of the petty bourgeoisie. In the last elections, through a United Front of the left, the Radicales made Jan Antonio Ríos President. The second group, nearly as large, is the Conservadores: the rich, the landowners, their servants, and the agricultural workers on the large estates who vote as they are told. At the last elections they supported the dangerously reactionary former President Ibañez. But within this party there are good men . . . men more fundamentally radical than some socialists and than most communists, in that they recognize the religious dimension, the dimension of depth as a dynamic of political action: the brilliant Senator Cruz Coke, for instance, and Rafael Gumucio, who recently resigned from the presidency of the party in protest against its isolationism and its refusal to support a break with the Axis. The third group are the Socialists, almost as strong as the first two; and more advanced, far more militant than our own socialists. Their leader, Marmaduke Grove, is a man of principle and courage: a soldier who has brought fire into his party. The Communists in Chile, always brilliantly organized, are a highly respectable factor in the United Front. Their average vote of about fifty thousand is as large, in this country of five millions, as in the United States with a hundred and thirty millions. About equal in size are the Liberales, the party of ex-President Arturo Alessandri; they correspond doctrinally to our New Deal Democrats and Wendell Willkies. Smaller groups are the Falange of Frei: really Christian and really socialist, and for both reasons persecuted by the corrupt hierarchy of their own Catholic Church; and the Fascists who, from underground, carry on their sniping and their plotting. (They have, to help them, of course, the pro-Franco Spaniards, the reactionary Catholics, and the still open Nazi Embassies in Santiago and Buenos Aires, into whose coffers flow thirty per cent of the profits of all German firms in South America.)*

The aristocratic ruling class, the *Pelucos*, betrayed Chile. They got rich from the nitrate fields and the sale to foreign capital of mineral lands northward. With this money they contributed nothing: they did not develop agriculture; they left the tax burden

* The break of Chile with the Axis, long anticipated, came in January, 1943.

on the poor. When hard times came, Chile was unprepared; and what had been an aristocracy distinguished by its breeding and by its lovely women, veered, as elsewhere, toward the fascists.

This politically advanced nation lives in poverty pitiful and painful. The *roto** of the towns, the *huaso* of the fields, has known so hard a life through generations that when he has money he buys . . . not goods, but *rest*. Even the fully employed skilled worker labours only forty weeks a year. The workman of other countries toils to improve his home, his family's standard of living, his clothes. The typical man of Chile has got used to his rags and hovel; even when he can afford shoes he will not buy them; not until he has "rested." And of course, wine helps him to rest. Here is Chile's deepest problem. It is soluble; but it is not so simple as putting money in the worker's pocket. There must be formed in him, not first, but as his economy improves, the will to defend his body and the life of his children. Moreover, money is not plentiful in Chile. The Pelucones still own most of the cultivable land; and they have preferred to spend what they can wring from its poorly developed soil, rather than invest in technical improvements which would hearten and educate the workers. The large industries, of course, are in the hands of foreign capital: there as elsewhere the synonym for irresponsibility.

Paradoxically, Chile's economic backwardness has been encouraged by her political freedom. After the last war, a progressive wave swept the nation. It was not grossly betrayed, as in the countries where social democracy collapsed into reaction and fascism. A subtler treachery took place. The fervour for political freedom found political form, and *remained political*. The symbol of this process was Alessandri, the vivid little political genius who so strongly reminds me of Theodore Roosevelt. It meant more to the *roto* and the industrial worker to be "free": free to say what he wished, read what he wished, vote for the revolutionary party of his choice, than to harness this "freedom" to the dull, grinding, intricate business of better housing, better clothes and food, and to the basic problem: the nationalization of his country's wealth. The Chilean's psychology was inert for these practical ends; but was keenly responsive to the idealism of political "freedom." His church, doubtless, encouraged his fatalism about a better life on earth. As to the basic problem, the nationalization of his country's wealth: even if he had been ready for the challenge, how far would he have gotten in opposing the immense economic power of the United States? He was not ready for that. Alessandri put it baldly to me, when he said: "We Chileans, left to ourselves, would not have developed Chuquicamata or the *salitre* fields. And whatever you may feel, Señor, about the 'slave spirit' of the workers in American-owned mines, they were taught a higher standard of living there than they ever got from Chilean employers."

* *Roto* literally means "broken."

The agricultural wealth of the country was not in foreign hands; the Chileans might have taken it over (like Mexico) without challenge from us. That they have failed to, despite their advanced political doctrine, proves the morbidity of their political freedom. Life has been too hard; they must be weaned gradually from their grim submission; from the easy escapes of wine and of mere political "self-assertion." Democratic politics has become a game in Chile—while the babes die by millions, and the poor, ill-fed and without warmth, shiver in their hovels.

Yet this "freedom" of even the most destitute Chilean is not entirely delusion. Watch the ragged *roto* of the slums of Santiago or Talcahuano; watch the *huaso* of the fields, immersed in the winter mud and the summer dust. There is in him a deep dignity of spirit that will impress you. An American or an Argentine, dressed as he, living as he, would hide his face for shame. The *roto* feels no shame, despite the shame of his clothes, the shame of the destruction of his race by poverty and malnutrition. And the American, or Argentine, well-housed and well-fed, lacks the dignity of the *roto*.

The paradox has ramifications. It explains, for instance, why the radical and revolutionary parties of Chile betray their people. The leaders know well enough that the country's economic problems must be solved. They know that the birth rate must be raised, the death rate lowered; that there must be new housing; that the folk must be taught what to eat. And of course, much is done—although far less than is needed. More is not done, because the leaders feel, perhaps unconsciously, the lack of pressure from the masses who have chosen them precisely for their democratic values. If they express these values in political gestures, the folk is with them; if they get to work on dull, practical problems, the folk lose interest. Rare is the political leader who, when he finds that a rousing speech in defence of freedom or of the Allies or against fascism wins more response than the routine of a committee for workers' houses, will devote all his time to the committee.

Chile in body is poor; had been poor so long that her folk's bodies accept dearth. Chile's body is potentially rich: in the minerals of her northern deserts, in her central valleys and southern forests which can be exploited to support in decency a far more numerous folk. This potentiality of wealth is a symbol. Even as the dignity beneath the rags of the *roto* is the signature of a subtly strong spirit.

SANTIAGO

What had happened to me in Buenos Aires was perfect for the United Front parties of Chile, resolved to force President Ríos and the slick Foreign Minister Barros Jarpa into a break with the Axis. I had become a flag for democracy; they intended to wave it. The papers vociferously welcomed me. Meetings of *homenaje* were arranged. On my second night, at the suggestion of our Ambassador

Claude Bowers, I went to one, held by the Radicales, the party of the President. There, while the oratory flourished with tropical, non-Chilean exuberance, I got the lay of the land. I declined to be present at all further political meetings. When the United Front, without consulting me, announced a huge manifestation in my honour, I skipped town (hiding in Vicente Huidobro's cottage by the sea) and sent a message to be read in my absence. I told Grove and the others that I was going to stick to my role: I was not a political writer, I was not a political figure. I had not come to Chile to force any action. I had come to learn; and to reveal, as best I could, the basic truths of this world crisis. If what I said helped the Chileans to decide what they should do, so much the better.

Vicente's cottage over the Pacific was struck by a typhoon. Water poured into my room, almost floating my bed with me in it, so that I had to be bailed out. Maybe it was a signal of wrath from Heaven. I do not think so. I think I had decided rightly.

I believe I should have succumbed in the maelstrom caused by my arrival (my head still bandaged, my energy still extremely low) had it not been for my secretary, loaned to me by the University of Chile. Magda Arce came down to the airport with my duties already catalogued. During my entire stay in Chile, she worked fourteen to sixteen hours every day, wisely managing; warding off the importunate, sifting, minimizing my engagements.

The fascists went immediately to the attack. Two of the worst, by the way, had been well equipped for the job by their long visits to the United States as guests of either the Rockefeller Committee or the State Department (I forget which). They are Manuel Vega, editorial writer of the servile reactionary Catholic sheet, *El Diario Ilustrado* and Raúl Silva Castro, chief of the Chilean Section of the National Library. Vega published a series of clever articles in which, by quoting from my books . . . principally *América Hispana* . . . he unmasked me as an enemy of Chile, a despiser of the mestizo, a defamer of Chile's women. (Of course, by the same method of carefully isolated sentences, *The Rediscovery of America* could be employed to prove me an enemy and a despiser of the United States.)

The *Diario Ilustrado* was the pseudo-respectable "front" of the campaign. The walls of the city burgeoned with "Death to the Jew-Yankee Frank," scrawled by artists who doubtless got their pay at the backdoor of the Nazi Embassy. And one day the central streets were littered with throw-aways proving that I was a war-monger, a representative of international Jewry and American imperialism, and a defamer of the virtue of Chile's women. The pamphlet closed by recommending that the patriots of Chile visit upon me the same kind of welcome I had received in Buenos Aires.*

The papers announced that I had been declared "huesped

* This was the note in all the continent's fascist press. I have before me a piece from a magazine published in Bogotá, Colombia, calling itself "Christian," promising me the same treatment in Colombia.

ilustre" of the University of Chile; and there was a movement on foot among the younger professors to give me an honorary degree. The *Diario Ilustrado* ran an editorial attacking the national university for honouring an "enemy of Chile." This institution, like most such, was staffed by a few brave, a few reactionary, and a large number of timid men. The timid prevailed. And one of their number was instructed by the Rector to publish a letter in *Diario Ilustrado*, explaining that, whereas I was the University's guest, I was not its "guest of honour." The satiric weeklies, always so much braver and more truthful than the august academics, poked savage fun at the lily-livered University for demeaning itself before a corrupt newspaper in the pay of the fascists;—and the fascists took heart.

My first Santiago lecture, and my last, were to take place at the Teatro Municipal, the city's largest auditorium. Now, a group of the town fathers objected. For seven days the battle raged. Then two of Ríos' Ministers stepped in: good men who were to become my friends: the Socialist leader Oscar Schnake and the Radical Minister of the Interior, Raúl Morales Beltrami. The Teatro Municipal was mine, as arranged.

Driving to the stage entrance, I saw the crowd in the Plaza and the regiment of soldiers. The Government was taking no chances. The huge, many-galleried theatre was packed. Professor Ricardo Latcham introduced me with a long discourse giving example after example, from nineteenth-century history, of citizens of Hispano-American republics who had gone to other republics and openly criticized their institutions and their leaders. I had been simply following, he said, a great American tradition. And the nationalistic sentiment of our day proved our intellectual decadence.

The audience, when I got up to speak on the "War Beneath the War," was reserved, sceptical: utterly distinct from the publics of Argentina. It took me a long time; but before I sat down I had won Santiago; the applause was heavy and enduring—like the Chilean nature. In my second and third lectures, the ones on fascism and true democracy, loudspeakers had to be installed in the patio for the great overflow of students. But the fourth lecture, on American literature, had a comparatively small audience which filled perhaps three-fourths of the Teatro Municipal. All the lectures were broadcast to the nation.

It did not take me long to recognize the strong undertow of feeling against the United States in Chile. Even the liberals have it; many who are unaware of it themselves. Alessandri, the grand old man of Chilean politics, who has none of it, explained it to me. A long time ago, when Blaine was our Secretary of State under President Harrison, an American vessel, the *Baltimore*, steamed into Valparaiso. The sailors went ashore, and of course got drunk. But the fight that started with Chilean sailors was less according to the rules. Alessandri told me, with unmasked pride, that the Chilean

boys were better with the knife; a good number of the Yankees were hurt and several were killed. Chile's government opened a court of inquiry to fix the blame for the battle. Washington arrogantly refused to await its findings: Chile must apologize and salute the Stars and Stripes, or else. . . . Humiliated and angry, Chile was forced to submit. An entire generation, at the turn of the century, was reared in hatred of our country. And this same generation, in so far as it was concerned with science, philosophy or letters, went to school to the Germans. There are strong similitudes, despite great differences, between the German and the staid, thorough, *tuechtig* man of Chile. As one passionate anti-fascist told me—one of Chile's leading men of letters: "I was brought up to worship the Germans."

President Ríos would get along very well with pre-Hitler, perhaps as well with post-Hitler, Germans. He is an unimaginative man of some moral strength. I found him utterly negative to my ideas. When, for instance, I suggested to him that he might make an honest deal with President Roosevelt: a break with the Axis in return for the loan of money to buy back Chile's American-owned mines, he was unresponsive. I got the impression of a dull and limited man (more common in Chile than in the rest of America Hispana). But if you tried to push him around, you would find him tough and unmovable as the Andes.

The negative qualities of Chile's virtues: her matter-of-factness, her practical, slow rhythm, are sometimes personified without the positive. For instance, Don Ernesto Barros Jarpa, the Foreign Minister.* He is the shrewd and shallow lawyer. But there are plenty of others: like the vital, electric seventy-three-year-old Alessandri—who probably has done more harm to Chile than a dozen Barros Jarpas; for it is the Alessandri kind of man who has indulged the Chilean's passion for mere "political" freedom.

But there are seriously devoted men in the government and out of it: for instance, Dr. Cruz Coke, who is a Catholic Senator; and Drs. Leonardo Guzmán and Salvador Allende, former and present Ministers of Health—men who are tackling the toughest problems of Chile, such as birth mortality and housing,† which must be used

* Resigned since my visit.

† Here is the death rate per thousand live-born infants aged less than a year. The figures are from *La Alimentación en Chile* by Jorge Mardones R. and Ricardo Cox B.

1934-262

1935-251

1936-252

1937-241

1938-236

1939-225

1940-217

1941-200

The reader will observe that there is some progress in a still dreadful situation. Dr. Salvador Allende in his book, *La Realidad Medico-Social Chilena*, published while he was Minister of Health (1939) flatly declares: "Chile has the highest infant mortality in the world." He states further that one out of every twenty births in Chile is stillborn, which would materially increase the above figures. 27.9% of all births, he says, are illegitimate; 400,000 children lack schooling, and 600,000 are illiterate. The population of the country is probably under five million.

as thresholds to the basic, only *indirectly* approachable problem: the psychology of the people.

MEDITATION AND PROPOSAL

The country haunts me: its misery and its strong spirit. I have the sense of a great human life, and of its being murdered.

Deep in us all is the certainty that right makes might; that the good man, the good nation, somehow prevail. Within this delusion is an intuitive truth: the right and the good do not perish, cannot perish, in so far as they point to the destiny of Man . . . of Man, as an organic whole moving through time in a purposive direction. But this destiny is expressed at every moment in the lives of individual men and individual nations. In them, since they are individual, it can perish. The delusion that it cannot is based on the false logic of transferring the inherency of right and of good from Man as an organism of infinite generations to man as an individual or to individual races and peoples.

As part of Man, our fate is certain. As individual men and as individual nations, our fate is uncertain. History does not tell us of superior men and nations succumbing to the inferior, only because history is written—in such cases—by the survivors. This possible election for ourselves of good or failure, life or death, is our tragedy and our glory. At a moment of such choice America stands today. There is nothing certain about American destiny. If the present leaders of the American hemisphere prove themselves incapable of recognizing the truly creative forces at our disposal, incapable of saving them and of employing them, all the rhetoric of Pan-America, of hemisphere solidarity and democracy, will remain rhetoric.

A case in point is Chile.

We of the United States today (perhaps not tomorrow) are the hemisphere's leaders; and no sane Hispano-American will deny this. It does not mean that we are better or smarter or richer in human values than our neighbours. It certainly does not mean that we are less good. It means that a conjunction of past events in the Americas, and in Europe, has thrust the hour and the challenge of choice upon us. If now we show deep consciousness of the hemisphere, we may become creative leaders; the America of the poets may be born. But this consciousness must itself be born through action.

For instance: We of the United States are engaged in a war which we must win, not in order to storm Heaven, but to resume, more honestly, more soundly, our laborious, slow march toward the threshold of a decent way of life. It was in part our ignorance of this way and our devotion to false ways, that brought the war upon us. In our struggle, we look to our neighbours to help us. We appeal

to them, justly, because of our common democratic values. But these values imply the understanding, the respect, and the conservation, of Man. How much understanding, how much respect, how much help in conserving, do we reveal in our acts? We have eliminated some of our past evil behaviour. Recently there is no black mark against us, like Panama or Nicaragua. We spend a good deal of money, we send down to our neighbours a good many excellent experts, to help in specific problems like sanitation or the financing of public services. In fundamental acts which would prove our democratic will (to understand, to respect, to conserve Man) we still have a poor record. When, for example, Mexico a few years ago nationalized her oil, we allowed our petroleum interests to sabotage, as best they could, this basic and heroic democratic step. The saboteurs failed; only then, in bad grace, our Government submitted. Did we really understand the Mexican people? Did we show them respect, the will to conserve man, as man exists in Mexico's part of our "democratic hemisphere?" Not only did we fail as leaders; we showed ourselves reluctant to acknowledge the work of real democratic leaders such as Lázaro Cárdenas, who was striving to preserve his people—an American people, by giving it back part of its own wealth.

Chile is poor; so poor that her people have accepted poverty and turned their democratic doctrine into a morbid political game. We, as leaders of the hemisphere, must for our own sake do something about it. Specifically we can help the Chilean people to get back their mines, which are largely in the hands, not of the American people, of course, but of American capitalists who would treat us as they treat Chileans, if we were as weak and let them.

My plan is simple. We can lend Chile the money to buy back her mines. When Chile belongs to Chile, the folk of Chile will have been supremely aided in achieving a new attitude toward their own health and toward the survival of their children. This help will have come from *us*. We shall have shown that we are, indeed, democratic leaders.

I talked of the plan with labour men. Their eyes shone. Perhaps it is not practical? I discussed it with business men: good and successful ones; who assured me the plan was eminently practical. Their eyes shone also. I talked of it with that canny and cautious man of affairs, the Rector of the University of Chile: a man not overburdened with imagination or fervour. Hernández said the plan was worth study. I tried to discuss it with President Ríos, but he evaded it. As did Minister Barros Jarpa. And this convinced me that the plan must be discussed by us, *at home*: Chileans cannot suggest it. If we are leaders, if we are democratic leaders of a hemisphere devoted to democracy, the job of suggesting the plan, of putting it on a practical basis, is ours.

If we do less than such immediate basic work, everything less that we do . . . the goodwill talk of politicians, the goodwill work

of the Committees for Inter-American Affairs . . . will turn out to be nothing.

And our hour of opportunity won't last forever.

My pages on Chile in *America Hispana* accused her of turning toward the Pacific. This is definitely not the truth today, whatever it was in the abnormal days of 1929. Chile used to be the "port of call" for all the European boats plying the Pacific—until the Panama Canal. Boats from Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Scandinavia, bound for all ports from Peru to Vancouver, went through the Straits of Magellan; stopped en route at Punta Arenas, Talcahuano, Valparaiso. Chile was in immediate touch with all Europe. When the Canal opened, most of this business was lost; and towns like Punta Arenas, Talcahuano, Antofagasta, show it. Now, with the exception of the traffic to Argentine and Brazilian ports, Chile's access to the Atlantic is through the United States. Chile doesn't like it. Chile resents it. The country is as much aware of the Atlantic world, as Argentina; and with a viewpoint—at the moment—less nostalgic, more dynamic.

Chile's intellectual life is less brilliant and fluent, not only than Argentina's and Mexico's; than that of other small countries like Ecuador, Venezuela, Colombia and Cuba. It is a bit dull, but substantial; prosaic, and produces poets. It does not lack world awareness. Chile rivals Buenos Aires and Mexico as a publishing centre for Hispano-American, North American and European books. Its editions are cheap and often pirated. But the market is significant. Oddly enough, there are few traits of ferment—Bohemia, Grub Street, Greenwich Village, and the like—in this sedate folk. It seems to achieve artistic creation without the racket.

I have, strongly, the sense that American diplomatic pressure on Chile to break with the Axis was worthless. Chile's feeling for American solidarity is Ibero-American, her friendship with Brazil is deep, and Brazil's entrance into the war moved Chile more than all the conferences of our envoys, all the pleasant notes and invitations of President Roosevelt. The sense of continental union is strong in Chile; and grows stronger with the consciousness of dependence on the United States. From this conflict of consciousness, resentment, and awareness of economic danger, came Chile's slowness to act in accord with the Rio de Janeiro promise to break with the Axis.

Every day I try to free at least an hour for wandering about Santiago. Sometimes I go out with my old friend of Buenos Aires, Samuel Glusberg, whose pen name is Enrique Espinoza. Sunday morning, I went to the Mercado and La Vega with another exile, Luis Alberto Sánchez of Peru and his wife; and the Socialist Deputy and poet (a real one!), Julio Barrenechea and his wife.

Many drunkards stagger from the wineshops. The poverty is appalling; in its dark timelessness, it is almost Oriental. Nevertheless, an unconquered people! Would I find something like them in China? . . .

The women of Chile are solid—and have singing voices.

“GERMAN” CHILE

Marmaduke Grove . . . Don Marma to the Chilenos . . . is a big, bald man with the candid face of a child. He slaps his revolver that he always carries with him:

“I’m going south with you. We’ll make up a little committee—including Julio Barrenechea, so you can talk poetry when you want to. We’ll take care of you.”

I accept gladly. But when Magda brings the news to Juvenal Hernández, Rector of the University of Chile, he shakes his head:

“If Grove goes, the trip will be political. There’ll be ten thousand at every station. The Germans will feel themselves invaded and provoked. There may be trouble. . . . If Grove goes, no one connected with the University goes.”

That would eliminate Magda, whom I need; and Manuel Rojas, the storyteller, who wants to accompany me. And much as I like Don Marma, the crowds and the politics are not my dish. He admits they could hardly be avoided. And I have been dreaming of my quiet walks through the towns and the fields: my best method for seeing.

With Magda and Rojas, in lieu of Don Marma and his committee, comes a detective from the Central Police: an unusually sensitive young man who has been with me in Santiago. The State Railways also insist that a representative, Señor Valenzuela, go with us.

The whole party and the luggage get off at Concepción; Rojas and I stay on the train as far as Talcahuano. This is a seaport, a night’s journey south of Santiago. Overripe and rotted with neglect, it lies among hills on a harbour of little beaches. With most of its ocean traffic gone, it stagnates and lives principally by fishing. The walls have many chalk-marks: “Vive Hitler,” “Chile for the Chileans”; also “Down with the Nazis,” “Viva el Frente Unido”: the two sides about even. The men, in incredibly decayed clothes, appear to slumber within some Yogi-like abstraction that bring them calm and insulates them from their rags and the bleak air. The women try to put bravery into their mean dress: and are therefore more pitiful than the men. We charter a car and drive to San Vicente, a fishing village the temperature of whose straggling folk seems to be that of a grey sea. Then by the back door we drive to Concepción.

The city, the third largest of Chile, still shows many ruins (including the Cathedral) of the 1939 earthquake which in thirty

seconds killed tens of thousands. As an organism the town seems shattered. Earthquakes are a significant factor in the psychology of Chile. Every Chilean recalls "his earthquake," although perhaps he was a child when his house fell on him and he rushed into the gaping street. The ocean, the mountain, the ungiven and treacherous earth, drive the Chilean within himself. If his stamina is strong, he will be strong of spirit. Weak, he will fall to alcohol, and to some remote domain of satisfaction, contemplative, defeatist, not without values of his religious culture: a mood impervious to earthquakes and bleak poverty.

Concepción is three cities: the bourgeois town, colourless, its strong edifices surviving the treacherous earth and yet spiritless and hopeless; the "ciudad universitaria," a dull agglomerate of academic buildings like some second-rate midwestern institution; and the proletarian town: festering one-story dwellings and the streets crowded with the low-keyed perdurance of life in Chile. The town in its disarray reveals the dissolving influence of misery and earthquake. It lacks the secret nucleus of its own men and women who, even in want, retain a wholeness that is rare in the rich and poor of other countries.

Through Concepción runs the famous river Bio-Bio . . . lush, murmuring the onomatopœia of its name, before it dies in the sea. We hire an old barouche (Magda has rejoined us in Concepción): a relic of nineteenth-century splendour, creaking in every joint as if it would fall into dust as the two horses draw it. We drive along the Bio-Bio, its banks swept by a fiercely cold wind and burgeoning with wooden hovels.

I had resolved on a vacation from newspaper interviews; my visit is unannounced. The University invited me to lecture, but there was a difficulty in dates; and I am free. A delusion. . . . As we sit in the Café Nuria, a group of men peer through the glass doors; whisper among themselves, and occupy a table near us. Soon, photographers join them. I escape to my room, and Rojas faces the reporters in the hall. It's a mistake I shall not repeat. The next day the papers carry fantastic stories of what Rojas and I have done in Talcahuano and Concepción. One particularly imaginative journalist avenges and justifies his failure to get an interview by describing how a group of nazis threatened me in the hotel lobby and how the police took me to jail; where, according to him, I spent the night for safe keeping.

All day we ride through the rain: misted pine woods, valleys and high hills, into the heart of German Chile. It might be winter in Wales. But a sudden clearing of cloud gives us a moment's glimpse of two volcanoes: like Japan's, white and coneshaped. Again, deep rain. We arrive in Valdivia after dark, in the dark rain. We drive to the hotel through silent, spotless streets. The houses, mostly of wood (this is the region of forests) have signs with German names.

Rojas and I steal out, alone. It has stopped raining. We go into the Café Schild for beer. Half the men are of the type one finds in a Bierkeller; the others are creole. One of these, very drunk, comes over to our table and, swaying upon us, starts a long oration. He is embarrassingly friendly; exorbitantly "honoured." "That this should happen to *me*, humble *me*! Look!" He addresses the café. "God permits me to clink glasses in Valdivia, in this humble café, with the champion of democracy." He weeps in his mug for joy. I smile at the other men, and they smile back. There will be no trouble, I am sure. But Rojas, who feels responsible and carries the gun, is just a little nervous.

Valdivia, centre of the predominantly German section of Chile, lies between wooded hills on a swift and high-banked river. Its principal streets, with their bourgeois houses, German in spirit and shape, are cold: aloof from the land. Practically all the professional and commercial names are German. But beyond this limited and prosperous heart is another city: the Valdivia of the creoles. Here, hovels and huts in the mud of unpaved streets; a city as apart from the other as the Negro section of our southern cities. On the walls, the proletariat have written: "Death to the Nazis," "Viva Ríos." In the proper central streets, fewer signs; but these read: "Viva Ibañez."

The central streets, not the poor ones, are full of Germans or descendants of Germans. They look at us in cold reserve. Those who name or greet me are always creole. The true vibrance of Chile is diluted by the Germans. Even in the poor streets where few Germans live, there is dilution. The Germans are a negative force; they take away, rather than create an atmosphere of their own. If they have an atmosphere, it is architectural; it is the stolid aloofness of their houses which offset by contrast the Chilean strength—deep-rooted, warm—of other cities. Even the German cafés, where every individual drinker might have been picked out of a Bierstube in Würtemberg or Baden, have no German *Gemütlichkeit*. No sullenness, either. The air of the Germans is reserve—and waiting. They are waiting. On the day Hitler wins, they will show themselves the sons and daughters of a conquering race; change their tone from minor to major. But even if Hitler loses, they will keep on waiting; they will not change quickly. The hope of the Germans in South America is deeper than the Fuehrer, *and will outlast him*.

The secret of this "German" Chile is plain. It is not even half-German. But its economy is German. The great lumber estancias and the small farms, the industrial and commercial houses, are predominantly German. Not all the Germans are pro-nazi. Probably not more than eighty-five per cent. Several members of the first families: great grandchildren of the German founders, came to see me at the hotel. It would not be safe to disclose their names. One man sent me a note to tell me he was the grandson of a soldier in

the Union Army who had fought in our Civil War under Carl Schurz.

When we walk through the town, or out of it . . . Rojas and I, or Rojas and Magda and I . . . two detectives in huge ponchos and sombreros always trail us. Night and day, one stands outside the hotel in the rain (it rains forever in Valdivia). They are dressed as *paisanos*; and I must respect their disguise. On one walk, the rain, suddenly furious, drives us all together into a corner grocery. I am puzzled what to do: whether to talk with them or ignore them. I solve the problem by buying oranges and distributing them to everybody.

We go back to the hotel, and with Valenzuela retire to a café for *Frühschoppen*, that most delicious glass of beer taken on an empty stomach before lunch. Our secret service man tells me confidentially that eight nazis have just crossed the Andes from Valdivia into Argentina. The police got wind of them, too late. Connections are constant and strong between Valdivia and Osorno here in Chile, and Argentina. The two Embassies are in touch with many townsfolk; the police have a hard time.

On our way back to the hotel, Magda and I walk ahead of the others. Two blond girls of about eighteen, obviously the daughters of Germans, pass us. Looking me straight in the eye, they say in unison: *Heil Hitler!* So charming, so childlike is their blushful bravado, that I smile and laugh into their faces. They go on, past the rest of our group. Rojas, who has the good ears of the storyteller, reports to me that as they pass him, one of the girls says to the other: "Qué simpático!" ("He's real nice, isn't he?")

Forty miles north of Valdivia, in the heart of Araucania, there is a village called San José de Maraquina. A Capuchin Bishop lives there, among his monks and his flock; many German, many Indian. He is known as Guido Beck de Ramberga; he is a German from Ramberg in the Bavarian Palatinate; he is a militant anti-Nazi. I want to see the Bishop; on my first evening in town, I speak with him on the phone. No, he is not coming to Valdivia; but if we can make our way to Maraquina, we shall be more than welcome.

"Making our way" these forty miles is not so simple as I, an American, imagine. First we must cross the river on a *balsa* that is nothing but a raft. Then, the miles of black, heavy mud. . . . No chauffeur in Valdivia will attempt the journey; no price can budge them. *Impossible*, is their verdict. It is in such crises that Señor Valenzuela shows his value. He turns up with an auto-car; a Ford grooved to the railroad tracks. We drive through the drear, wet winter to where the Bishop is to meet us.

He is a blond, bearded, magnificently built man of about forty; clear of complexion and eye as a babe; giant-strong; with that jovial good humour which is the proper mood for martyrs. Bishop

Beck may not be a Saint; I trust he will not be a martyr. But he is a candidate for both. He is not merely an anti-nazi; he *fights* the nazis—and in the thick of their own province. Also, the nazis fight him. From his presses, go forth pamphlets through the land, in Spanish and in German, to prove that Christians of whatever blood cannot be pro-nazi. The Germans retaliate by withholding their contributions, the economic lifeblood of his schools and missions. The pamphlets do not falter. Now comes word from Germany itself: threats of reprisal against fellow-Capuchins in Germany, and against Beck's family. (His old parents still reside in Ramberg.)

I asked the Bishop: "If the Nazi threats from Germany get worse, will you have to stop or ease off in your fight for democracy?"

He ran his strong fingers through his beard, and pondered.

"When I was confirmed as a Bishop," he said at last, "I took the vow to tell the truth, cost what it might. I do not recall that there were any reservations."

We spent the morning in his seminary, his hospitals, his schools. We heard the little silent Indian girls suddenly burst into song that was the soul of their silence. I had a talk alone in his private room with a young priest, a full-blooded Araucanian, whose lean, ascetic face gave me a sense of the steel stubbornness of his people. Little of this blood is diffused through the present creole race of Chile. But the little goes a great way.

Beck spoke with reservation and kindness of his nazi fellow-Germans. In his judgment (he spoke of those in Chile), the sin of pride has won them.

"They cannot resist the temptation of belonging to the Master-Race." He shook his head, and smiled as if children were before him. "Ah, but they will learn; they will awake!"

It was a bleak day; the clouds low, the trees drenched, and the roads heavy. In the school, in the hospital, in the drab village, Guido Beck de Ramberga was a kindling fire. Before we left, we sat at his table and ate good German fare: cold veal with mayonnaise, *Kartoffel-salat*, and *Linser Torte*. The wine was of Chile. The spirit was universal.

It is not far . . . five or six hours by train . . . from Maraquina to the city of Temuco, whose valley of Cautín is the very heart of Araucania. The Indians call themselves *Maipuche*: (*maipu*=earth; *che*=man). Their homes are scattered through the broad valley ensconced in mountain: westward the maritime range; eastward the snow-topped Cordillera. They are a withdrawn folk, among their oxen and their chickens. Fight has gone out of them, leaving them lean, with a sharp sardonic humour that pierces you imperceptibly. Their homes, the *rucas*, are skeletal thatch houses of one room; animals on the earth floor; with no windows and no outlet for the smoke save the natural interstices of the crude beams and the straw. The children are shy as the little pigs; when the mother of

one tiny girl made her come out from hiding in her bed, she obeyed; and stood there howling her awful indignation.

Their poverty is not squalor; not the misery of the *rotos* and *huasos*. The Indians, even when the snow falls, have a secret pact with the earth. They are, as they call themselves, the true earthmen. Therefore, they do not need the saving dignity of the poorest creole, deeply and mysteriously inward. Talking with them, sitting with them in their *rucas*, hearing the incisive intelligence of the old mothers, helping the jolly men rescue a mired ox from the stream, with the Cautin stately and strong about us and verdant even in this winter, I had the sense of a folk who, from their centuries of struggle against the Inca and the Spaniard, have returned to earth.

One can study in them the lore of the earth; and our own subtlest roots. For they are the soil before it aspires: another aspect of the beauty that blooms in flowers, of the sweetness of fruit, of the reach of tall trees. And there is in them none of the acid alienation which one feels in our own Indians. They, no less than ours, have been bloodily beaten back by the white man. What is the secret of the difference? Perhaps the answer is to be sought in places like San José de Maraquina.

But in the town of Temuco, I face again the bitter facts of Chile. Temuco is less German than Valdivia; hence more of Chile's vibrance in its streets. But beyond its bourgeois squares, the same sordid barricades of mouldy and rancid houses, the same rank squalor of a folk torturing its soul to somnolence with raw wine, losing half its newborn, gutted with tuberculosis and malnutrition.

It is a folk, in all the towns I have seen from the Straits of Magellan to Antofagasta, living, behind cracked or shuttered windows, a dark, stubborn victory over the damp and the cold and the constant want. A folk luminous with spirit; a folk that will live in my memory forever with rending pity—and thanksgiving that the human spirit is tough.

CHAPTER VI

INTERLUDE IN LIMA

I had not intended to visit Peru on this journey. I know Peru, from its rich valleys above the Pacific coast where some of mankind's most exquisite cultures have flourished, declined and flourished again, to its bleak, hard Andean plateau, called *Puna*, three miles up in the thin air, from which the Incas went forth, not quite a thousand years ago, to conquer an empire that reached from what is now Colombia to Argentina. I thought this time I'd better leave Peru alone. Exiled Peruvian friends, members of the suppressed democratic party, the *Apra*, had told me of bitter persecutions and of the concentration camp on the island of *El Frontón*.

On the other hand, President Prado's administration, long before Pearl Harbour, had turned out the German airlines and declared Peru's solidarity with the United States. Why mix into internal politics? and how avoid it, if I went?

But in Chile came a cable, signed by twenty-eight Peruvian Congressmen, urging me "in the name of the democratic cause" to be their guest of honour. That intrigued me, for I knew the common story that all of Prado's *Cámara de Diputados* had been hand-picked, none actually elected by popular vote. I went to Peru.

At the airport was a distinguished crowd: government officials, workers and students, and as warmly enthusiastic as in Argentina and Chile. At my press conference I spoke with special emphasis about my dear friend, José Carlos Mariátegui, dead since my last visit, to whom I had dedicated my book *América Hispana*; the great popular leader who symbolizes for me Peru's potential genius for creating a new social order, modern and yet based on the profound social and artistic genius of the ancient Peruvians under the Incas. . . . At six next morning, I was on my way to the marketplace; I bought the morning papers, and noted that none of the interviews mentioned my reference to Mariátegui.

At the Mercado, long lines of men and women stood in queues, like wartime Europe, waiting for the opening of the food stalls. When they opened, this mild and pacific folk thrust their money on the meat, fish and rice dealers, fighting to be served. The standard of living is much higher in Peru than in Chile, although not so high as in Argentina. Peru is a rich and varied land. Here was a sign of possible trouble.

Lima's marketplace is all Lima. A few pure whites; a few pure Indians: immobile and stolid like the rock of the Andes, or subtly sensuous like the warm, low valleys; a few pure Orientals, Japanese and Chinese; a few black Negroes. But the great majority a bewildering fusion of all these strains: Spanish-shaped heads, lean and austere, with Indian skins; Oriental skulls with eyes of Castile; Indian bodies with Spanish or African faces. The result is not confusion. For one quality embraces them all: the sensitive, deeply meditative tone that is Lima; and more than Lima: the coast of Peru and the rich upland plantations under the forbidding Cordillera, of sugar, rice and cotton.

The history of Peru is war: before the Conquest, during the Colony and the unstable Republic. The tone of Peru is peace. The conquering race of Quechuas and Aymara, ruled by the Incas, were the most peaceful imperialists on record. When they got ready to add another tribe to their highly socialized expanding nation, they camped a huge army on its border and sent across priests, teachers, agriculturists and artists. The propaganda went on for five years. Only then, if the foreigners remained unimpressed and did not petition annexation, did the army get busy. And when the tribe was deeply unwilling to join, as with the warlike Araucanians

of Chile to the south and the cannibals of the eastern Amazonian jungle, the army pushed them back and then left them alone.

One of the streets of the marketplace is devoted to the sale of flowers. The peasant women squat on the pavements, arrange their sprays and bouquets, under the rich-carved wooden balconies of the colonial houses. The flower sellers and the flower buyers, poor as they are (flowers are bread for the spirit), make a subtle music which is Lima and Peru. The *Limeñas* are lovely; the whole town is a ripe tropical fruit within the tang of the air which the Pacific currents keep cool.

But now there is food shortage. A cabinet minister, implicated in the scandal of selling the people's rice to a foreign market, had to resign. Communication between the three Perus—the coast, the upland and the Puna—has deteriorated. A long war will make it worse. This means trouble.

The key to present-day Peru: *extremes that do not touch*. We'll see how that touches *us*. Under the Incas, the whole Pacific region to the peak of the Andes and down into the eastern jungles was joined by three magnificent road systems: one on the coast, one on the high Puna, and one a net of transverse roads linking the other two, with inns and signal stations all along the lines. That was the last true unity of South Pacific America. Its base was a *democracy*; and the base of the new unity, the new stability, will have to be democratic.

Here are examples of the present day contradictions that confuse Peru. The Government is with us, so long as we support it. The vanguard of professors and students at the great university in Lima, and the professional classes, are strongly with us, in so far as we convince them of our democratic sincerity in the great struggle. But the big haciendas are owned by a group that listens to Franco's new feudal doctrine of "Hispanidad"; as do the small shopkeepers and the industrialists. The tenant farmers or share-croppers who run the haciendas—called *yanaconas*, an Indian name, are Japanese. They have the contacts with the poor Indians. And they are telling the Indians every day that Japanese and Indians are one race; that Japanese and Indians must drive out the white invader, whose "Big Chief" lives in Washington; and restore the socialist society of the Incas. The mountains of Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador are full of Indians—descendants of a real democracy—who are devotedly pro-nazi! Our democratic propaganda doesn't touch them.

Another instance: the biggest bank of Peru, with branches everywhere, was the Banco Italiano. Now, it is the Banco del Crédito del Peru. President Prado was director of the Banco Popular del Peru, whose interests have always been American; and earlier, President of the Banco de Reserva del Peru. But much of Prado's political power—in spite of their rivalries and private quarrels—comes from the group behind the other bank and behind the great reactionary paper, *El Comercio*, whose

connections are strong with the pro-Franco landowners, Italian finance, and the Japanese leaders in agriculture and small commerce.

Still another instance: not only the Indian culture of Peru was peaceful and conservative; Spanish Peru had the same traits. Peru was the last great colony to revolt, and so half-heartedly that only the combined armies of Bolívar from the north and of San Martín converging from Chile and Argentina freed it of the Spaniards. Yet this peaceful, conservative land has lived a century of social-revolutionary conflict. And it has produced two of the greatest Latin American revolutionary leaders of our time: Mariátegui, whom I have named, and Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre—of whom, more later.

There are said to be three hundred thousand Spanish Falangistas in South America, and although they are illegal in Peru, nowhere do they work with less disturbance. Peru's greatest organized democratic force, the *Apristas*, is also illegal; but their chief is in hiding, their leaders are exiled or in prison. Labour, moreover, with the exception of a few trades, like the taxi-drivers, the bakers and the textile workers, is not organized. There is a law of compulsory "arbitration" which practically bans strikes. From all this there may be no immediate danger. But if hard times come, there is trouble ahead. And if the war is long, or there are disturbances in neighbouring countries, there will be hard times. The truth is that Peru is dangerously unstable; and in the hands of a Government and army that cannot be trusted. In so far as our Government appears to trust it, we shall have the distrust of the Peruvian people.

An easy way to reveal the dramatic and dangerous extremes of Peru is to relate what I did, in a few hours of a single day. . . . At eleven, I was in the gracious colonial Palace, where, in 1929, I had been received by President Leguía. Leguía, a highly successful insurance agent, had superficially "united" the three Perus under a business administration that used our American loans to keep his followers rich and the people "quiet." After his long reign, came chaos. The people twice voted the *Apristas* into office; the army held the power and declared the Apra "unconstitutional": "a party with foreign affiliations." (The Apra believes in that Ibero-American unity which has been the ideal of every great Ibero-American since Bolívar.)

Now again a business man runs Peru. Prado is the kind of banker who combines the paternalistic good will of many of our own bankers with a culture that few American business men can boast. In his limited class way, he is a sincere well-wisher of his people. He is utterly out of touch with the deep creative genius of Peru—that genius which is expressed in the work of painters like José Sabogal and Julia Codesido; and in the fresh writings of Ciro Alegría.

As his suave words reached me, I saw that Manuel Prado was nervous. Under his gracious assurance, under his eloquent proofs that Peru was riding the storm well, his smooth face and his hands revealed that he was nervous.

When Leguía was in the Palace, Mariátegui—in a humble house of a humble street (named, symbolically, Calle Washington)—gathered round him an extraordinary group of artists, writers, social thinkers, devotedly close to the poor Indians and the exploited plantation workers. There was a similar group in Mexico, in the last days of Porfirio Díaz, and it gave eyes to the Revolution of 1910. Peru has not had her great revolution. Many of the best men in Mariátegui's group still work in Peru; but the more active, the more social-minded, are exiled: for the most part in Chile, traditional refuge for Latin Americans in political trouble.

From the Palace, I went to the Chamber of Deputies, where I was being honoured by a luncheon. I listened to the courteous law-makers of the nation, speaking so eloquently of Peru's democracy; explaining to me that the *Apra* was outlawed because it had degenerated into a band of murderers with nazi methods. Had not an Aprista shot President Sánchez Cerro, military dictator? and Miró Quesada, proprietor of *El Comercio*? As I listened, I saw the walls of the city, covered with chalk-marks that had been blotted out, but not well enough to hide, if one looked close, the word *Apra*. And I thought of my next engagement—with Haya de la Torre, who for five years has lived in hiding and in danger, refusing to leave his country.

At last the speeches were over and I got back to my hotel, dismissing my secretary (appointed to serve me by the Deputies, and therefore a man I could not trust—despite his efficiency and personal good will).

An Apra leader in Santiago, Chile, whom I had best not name, had carefully planned my visit with Haya. Any one of five men (I had their personal descriptions) might come to take me. *None came*. And I had learned in Lima that there had been a round-up; several of these five had been arrested. But at 8.00 of the morning two students of the University knocked at my door, two of a large delegation which greeted me at the airport; and I arranged the meeting with them.

When I entered the hotel lobby, both my men stood there, separate. I passed them without recognition and went up to my room. They followed, and gave the password. "Three agents in the lobby," they informed me.

We decided to walk out, and try to lose the detectives. A few blocks after we had jumped into a taxi, we knew that we were being followed. We criss-crossed and doubled; the detectives' car still tailed us. At last, after about ten minutes, we swung sharply, and found ourselves alone on a long street. With our car still moving, we jumped out, told the chauffeur to go ahead, and boarded another taxi, which turned into a side street. We had th

satisfaction of seeing our pursuers tag the other car. We doubled; got a third taxi; and convinced at last that we were safe, drove out to an empty house in the suburbs, where Haya was waiting.

Haya is a white man with the cranial contour and the countenance of an Indian chief; and the same tendency toward fatness. He laughed when I mentioned the added weight, and told me that for five years his sole exercise had been an occasional run from the police. He is strong, solid, energetic, at forty-seven; with that natural body-rhythm which one finds in all leaders whose life is strictly harmonized about a single purpose. Unlike other persecuted men, Haya has grown, spiritually, and kept his humour.

"They accuse us of being a party of violence," he said. "If we had been, you'd have visited me today in the Palace."

We discussed at length the problems which passionately interest us both: the way to get true democracy in America Hispana; the need of it for stable democracy in the United States; the imperative of a strong, united Ibero-America before there can be a beginning of *real* inter-American relations, and the puzzle of what the United States should do, in the case of a Government which supports us in our world-fight against the enemies of democracy, and at the same time stifles democracy at home.

This last point is not theoretical; our way of meeting it will affect our lives and hemisphere destiny for generations. *Aprismo* is a mass movement in Peru, with great resonance in other South American countries. Despite its many efforts at conciliation with President Prado, in order to help fight nazism at home and abroad, it is outlawed by a government that openly supports the United States, and that the United States has conspicuously supported by inviting President Prado to be its guest in Washington.

The position of our State Department seems logical: our Good Neighbour policy forbids our meddling in the internal politics of our sister republics; and when we did meddle (from Mexico to Colombia), men like Haya complained loudly. Moreover, we have a war on our hands, and any stable government to the south that helps us, helps in the big job.

Unfortunately, there is an answer, no less logical and with a longer, deeper view. Here it is. *We are meddling*. The anti-democratic base of the present government of Peru, its inability to solve the country's economic needs, would suffice to give the people power to overthrow it, were it not for our financial and economic support. Our Export-Import Bank has loaned it twenty or thirty million dollars. We have bought the cotton crop for the duration—at eighty per cent above the crisis price; and this money does not go down to the workers in increased wages; it supports government vigilance against them. In lesser ways, in the rubber and metal industries, we are subventioning, bolstering up a government whose weakness otherwise would make it fall before the true will of the people.

The people, therefore, are convinced that Washington supports *anti-democratic* governments. And when the Japanese, the Nazis and the reactionaries say just this, they are believed.

There is still another point against the wisdom of our policy. How far can *we* trust an anti-democratic government to be firm against sabotage within its borders; to suppress its fifth columns; and to abide with us in the dark and difficult days ahead when our duty will be to forge a free hemisphere world? The forces around Haya de la Torre, for instance, are surely our best potential allies for the creative tasks immediately beyond this war. The present government in Peru is doing its best to murder and scatter these forces. And we, indirectly, are helping them to destroy our own friends of tomorrow.

In the long run, in the Deep War which will be scarcely begun when Hitler collapses, our sole sound allies to the south are the Ibero-American peoples.

CHAPTER VII

A PROPOSAL FOR PARAGUAY AND BOLIVIA

This is the first time I have flown across the Andes north of Santiago, although in 1929 I rode up into its heart: by car from Antofagasta through the dread nitrate desert to the copper mountain of Chuquibambilla; and thence by train, past the asphalt lakes, the frozen pampa, the silver mountain of Potosí, to La Paz; by boat through Lake Titicaca and then again down to the west coast. . . . From Arequipa in southern Peru, our plane climbs slowly; we seem to crawl alongside the immensity of the volcanoes, Misti-Misti and Pichu-Pichu.

The westward Cordillera, as we creep above it, is the mountains of the moon. The heights are huge tempests of aridity; grey, iron, black, unflecked by any gentle colour: vast, dry caldrons of unmirroring emptiness under the pale day. Sunlight at these heights is always thin. We reach a floor, nearly as high as the Cordillera we have scaled, flat as pampa: Bolivia's bleak meseta which stands twelve thousand feet above the sea. On it are sharp low "hills"—higher than Pikes Peak. The land is grey and treeless. The vegetation is grey, fit only for llamas, alpacas, vicuñas. The sky, cloudless, with the sun high at noon, is a perpetual grey twilight. Lake Titicaca, the world's highest navigable water, is already pampa. Indistinctly, I can make out, from my memory of my sail on the lake, its terraced lands of the Inca and pre-Inca empires: marvels of mountain agronomy.

Suddenly, there is a gulch in the pampa; really a huge hole; and

in it is La Paz. Over it on all sides rises the flat tableland. And eastward the Cordillera Real . . . sudden towering peaks, glaciated or snowclad except where the rock is too sheer to hold the snow. Oruro is on the pampa, a sudden mountain of tin. The town clings to the mountain flank which feeds it, like a babe to its mother. The breast's milk is tin. A hard world.

Now the eastern Cordillera breaks from its snow summits into valleys of colour. Mountain sides become red earth, purple rock, saffron sand of streams. Finally, as we plunge eastward, trees! the green benison of trees. They are individualists at first; hermits standing alone on the huge emptiness. Soon, clusters of trees. Now warm valleys of grass and forest, as we float down (with ears pounding) into the verdant arms of Cochabamba (a mere eight thousand five hundred feet in the air), where there are roads tree-lined, flowers, goats, cattle . . . all the blessed humanities under a copper-saffron-orange mountain that stands between the valley and the immense iron-snow Cordillera.

(I was invited to lecture in Bolivia. In my present state of health the altitude would have completed the unfinished work of the Buenos Aires fascists. I recall how, in good health, in 1929, I nearly succumbed; how, when I lectured in La Paz, I had to stop several times and sit down for breath; and go to bed between engagements.)

East of Cochabamba, the mountains soften under their garment of trees. They roll low and long; they gambol and frolic like green-wool lambs. The soil, visible in cuts and swathes of water, is red. A last wall of steep earth, and the Andes are behind: we fly along a huge forest, six hundred miles more of Bolivia; then Brazil to the Atlantic.

Since I am deprived, on this journey, of my contemplated visits to Bolivia and Paraguay, the two inland republics of America, the two most purely Indian, the two most unfortunate, the two least understood, let me, instead, meditate upon them. . . .

Bolivia has lost every war she has fought with her neighbours; gradually giving up to them, east, west, south, north, her door to the Pacific (Antofagasta), and large portions of her land. Even so, today, her soil is potentially one of the world's richest. And on this land of fabulous mineral wealth walk the bare feet of the world's poorest people: the Aymara. Once they were the proud and peaceful collaborators of empire; contributing solid substance to the brilliance of the Quechuas, their Peruvian brothers; building the great socialist realm of the Incas, and far earlier civilizations, such as the mysterious Tihuanacu on the southern slopes of Lake Titicaca.

Bolivia's sin has been the deep peacefulness of her Aymara; their sullen refusal of the Spanish world before which they retreated, lost heart, but never surrendered. Her folk have been helpless against the aggressor abroad, and the exploiter at home.

Paraguay's sin has been her frenzied bellicosity. Paraguay's race

is the Guaraní. Except for the city folk who are bilingual, the entire nation speaks Guaraní. And the word *guaraní* means war. In 1864, Paraguay had a small border dispute with Brazil. In order to reach the Brazilians with effect, the President, Francisco Solano López, decided on a flank attack. This meant the invasion of the Argentine province of Misiones. And this meant war, not only with Brazil and Argentina, but also with Uruguay, bound to Argentina in a defensive alliance. To the Paraguayans, war with three nations instead of one was as nothing, compared to the advantage of a beautiful flank action.

Paraguay's population in 1864 was 1,337,000; that of her three enemies was twenty times as great. Paraguay's territory was sixty-one thousand square miles; that of her three enemies was over four and a half million square miles. For five years, she fought her three neighbours to a standstill. Every Paraguayan male over twelve bore arms; the women were the pack-animals, the carriers of the artillery. In 1870, López was killed in battle. The fields had returned to jungle; the cattle were all dead; the population had been decimated to 220,000, of whom 86,000 were children under twelve and 106,000 were women. From literal exhaustion, Paraguay of the Guaranís collapsed. Never since has her population reached a million.

In earlier and later wars, with the odds less than twenty to one against her, Paraguay has usually been the victor. Recently, she whipped Bolivia, which must be a mere five times her size. The spoil of this victory is the Chaco, a hundred thousand square miles of desolation on the west bank of the Paraguay: a land millennially watered by the blood of Guaranís and Aymaras. The price of her victory has been, again, exhaustion; Paraguay's state today is far more desperate than beaten Bolivia's.

The modern interpreters will tell you that this ferocious war in the green hell of the Chaco was "merely" a war over oil: a struggle between European and American petroleum interests for the huge deposits under the angry semi-desert. This is another example of the shallowness of economic history. Oil doubtless was a pretext and superficial cause. But the Chaco war between the Guaranís and the Indians of the Andes goes back to pre-Conquest days—back further than the days of the Incas. Without knowledge of the history and psychology of the Guaranís and Aymaras, no economist can understand these countries. Paraguay acts like a mad nation. There is deep cause . . . if not method . . . to her madness.

The Guaranís are one of the most interesting and original races of Indo-America. They did not produce profound arts like the Maya, Toltec, Zapotec, Aztec of Mexico and Central America; or like the Quechua-Aymara and earlier peoples of Peru's coast, who formed the Inca Empire of Tahuantín-suyu. Yet the Guaraní culture was strong. Their religion was monotheistic, with many minor animistic spirits. Their music and poetry was clever, subtle,

poignant. They were a people of war and of science; of religious cannibalism and the domestic virtues. Most of the natural history known to South America before modern times has Guaraní origins: geography, botany, zoology, biology, medicine were their field. And they were proficient also in the political arts. Their villages and towns, often with five thousand inhabitants, made a loose economic empire that covered what is now Paraguay, North Argentina, Uruguay and parts of Brazil. Before the arrival of the Spaniards, they were pressing westward to the Andes, eastward to the Atlantic.

The Guaranís were not a prolific race. Their adoration of the arts of war was a factor in this; and also their sexual coolness. When the Spaniards married the Guaranís, there were frequent suicides among the women, caused by their disgust at the insatiate sexual appetites of their beloved husbands. The problem of increase troubled the Guaranís. When they were converted by the Jesuits, the one demand of the padres which they refused was that they give up polygamy. They could not conceive of maidens bearing children out of wedlock; and they did not wish to condemn a single virgin to sterility for want of a husband.

The obsession, great and tragic, of the Guaranís, was the Inca Empire. Again and again, from 1000 to 1500 A.D., they fought it; and could never break it. The proud armies of the Inca refused to be lured into the Chaco, where the Guaraní tactics would probably have cut them to pieces. So the Guaranís had to go westward over the immense waste and jungle of what is now Bolivia; and when, under the shadow of the Andes, they at last made contact with the Quechua-Aymara hosts, they were exhausted, and beaten back.

This was the Cross of the Guaranís. Every generation, a new chieftain (chosen by the people) strove to break Tahuantin-suyu. None succeeded. So great was the obsession, that when the Spaniards drifted into the regions of the Paraguay, the Guaranís did not fight them. The Spaniards were the enemies of the Incas and had scattered, if not by any means subdued, the nations that made up the Empire. This was enough; by this alone, they became the allies of the Guaranís. Not Spain's soldiers conquered the subtle, nervous, highly intelligent, ferocious Guaranís, but the Jesuit fathers.

In my meditations on Uruguay, I said that, as one came to know each nation in South America, there was none whose tough personality did not justify its independence. I want to make an exception. The individual characters of Bolivia and Paraguay demand that they confederate.

Paraguay lived in virtual independence of Spain, from the beginning of the eighteenth century—a hundred years before her actual independence. She was too remote from the metropolis; Buenos Aires and Peru, the great Virreinos south and west,

laimed most of Spain's attention. And her wealth—*hierba mate*, wood, leather—was not what gold-hungry Spain wanted. The true conquerors of the Guaranís had been the Jesuits. Now, as the world empires outgrew their exclusive demand for gold and silver, the rule of the Jesuits over the Guaranís became economic. Against this modern drain and exploitation, the warlike Guaranís were helpless. From Asunción, down the Paraguay and Paraná, had gone the first colonists to Misiones, Corrientes, Santa Fe. But the Indian did not understand the new commercial spirit of the seaports, which came back from Buenos Aires and conquered the rivers. The Guaranís had tried to reach the Atlantic through southern Brazil. They had been stopped by the Bandeirantes, the adventurous pioneers of São Paulo who, when they in turn tried to push Portugal's empire westward, were stopped by the Guaranís. The failure westward against the Andes completed the circle in which the dynamic Paraguayans felt that they were prisoned.

This sense of frustration from all sides drove José Gaspar Rodríguez Francia, "El Supremo" of Paraguay from 1814 to 1840, to isolate his nation utterly. He refused trade down the rivers; he suppressed cultural relations; he even discouraged the speaking of Spanish. After his death, the pendulum swung wildly from isolation to aggression—we have seen with what dire results in the mad war against Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina. A similar atavistic frenzy was behind the bloody battles of the Chaco in the recent Bolivian war. Paraguay needs a field for her energy; needs raw materials for her technical talents; needs a wide land for her indomitable pride. She can never hold them through war. She may win them through sober collaboration and confederation.

Bolivia has the generous lands, the vast raw materials; but her people lack the aggressive and the technical traits to hold and exploit them. The Aymara proved their great worth as collaborators with the Quechuas. But the Quechuas belong to Peru. With them, the Aymara and their lands were safe. Divorced from them, the Aymara and their lands are in perpetual danger. Federation between Bolivia and Peru would not work. (It was tried.) Peru's neighbours, Chile and Ecuador, will not permit it. Bolivia does not want this marriage with a far stronger power which would simply absorb her. And even if it came to be, it would not solve Paraguay's problem:—which is, profoundly, a continental problem.

For ten centuries, Aymara and Guaraní have been *les frères ennemis* of South America; remarkably off-setting and complementing one another in character and in the nature of their countries. Alliance between them would bring out the strength of each; inspire each to fresh organic birth. Continued hostility between them will continue to exhaust them and to expose them in their weakness to the greed of their exploiters.

As I fly east toward the river Paraguay, I think of the railroad Brazil is building westward from Corumbá in Mato Grosso through

the lowlands of southeast Bolivia to Cochabamba; and of the railroad Argentina is pushing from Yacuiba through the Chaco northward into the same rich lowlands. The design of these two roads over a rich and helpless country is war!

This heart of South America . . . el Gran Chaco and Bolivia's easternmost province of Santa Cruz . . . is said to be the best oil land in the hemisphere. If it remains divided in the broken hands of the two enemy brothers, who can doubt the dream of the reactionary forces of Argentina and Brazil? Who can doubt the danger of a continental conflict between these two powerful nations?

Psychologically, Paraguay and Bolivia complement each other; economically, they need each other; historically, their wars prove their closeness. Politically, their union may mean the difference between war and peace for all South America.

Friends of Bolivia and Paraguay, I could not come to you on this journey. Take instead the gift of this proposal. It is a poet's dream. Both your lands have prospered, when they listened to the poets.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BODY OF BRAZIL

*The Thick Wood — The Mediterranean Sea — The
Angry Land — The Luminous Land — The Will and
the Mind*

THE THICK WOOD (MATO GROSSO)

At Corumbá, from the high bank of the Paraguay, one may look north and south, east and west, over the continent. The town on the edge of Mato Grosso, the thick wood, is almost the continent's geographic centre. With one's back to the river, westward one sees five hundred miles of the Bolivian jungles before the first important nucleus of population. They are inhabited by pumas, jaguars, a few truant Indian tribes with bows and arrows; beneath the jungles is oil. The Guaranís hacked their way through to meet the armies of the Inca. The Spaniards hacked their way through them, looking for Eldorado, to the silver mines of Potosí. Through them, still roadless after the centuries, the Bolivian army cut its way to meet the enemy brother in the Chaco. Beyond the five hundred miles, Santa Cruz is a city of over forty thousand, mostly Guaranís: a Bolivian city with a Paraguayan population.

The streets are unpaved; but the low-porticoed houses with wood-carved columns and balconies of iron have grace. The whites have a rarefied beauty; never in any town have I seen more lovely women, stepping like queens—always in pairs—through the dust or

mud of the gutters. The Indians bring into the dirty city streets their own dark world: wood and leafage. A university of two hundred and fifty young men looks far out into the world from within the dual wilderness of their wood and of the insane economic "order" which has maimed their country. I talked with them, found them more embittered than bewildered: news of the world comes to them the great distance, lean, but in its right perspective.

In Santa Cruz also are Germans; and in their hands the main business of the province: alcohol, light textiles, lumber. Soft-spoken, reserved, they are a dangerous fifth column. The Brazil-Bolivia railroad pushes past to Cochabamba; the Argentina-Bolivia railroad aims northward from Yacuiba: diagram—if the world does not change its mad economy—of future bloody struggles.

From Corumbá, now turn east to the river. A Brazilian gunboat lazily churns toward Ladario, where there are a naval station and the railway workshops. It is a spick and span little vessel, and as the day goes it blinks its varicoloured lights in salute to the city. Down the steep bank where we stand are the docks; two river boats are loading freight and passengers, bound northward for Cuiabá, the capital of Mato Grosso; southward for Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. There the larger boats go down to Buenos Aires, through a world where water is still the dominant means of travel. One of the boats is clean and smart, with tiny cabins, hot as hell at noon, cold at night.

The town, on this edge of Brazil, is not frontier, not a dilution between worlds, partaking of them both. It is Brazil, wholly. I am amazed to find in Corumbá the same folk, earth-close, earth-strong, as in immensely distant Minas Geraes or Pará. These western forest provinces, Mato Grosso, Goyaz, Amazonas, each of them more huge than Texas, are the homes of what is perhaps most typically Brazilian: even as our prairies and Rockies are perhaps most typically American. Mato Grosso was settled by the famed *bandeirantes* of São Paulo. These were warlike bands of the caboclos or mamelucos (mestizos of Portuguese and Indian) who in the eighteenth century waved west and north, hunting gold, capturing slaves. Their differences from our pioneers include the difference of an enormously more difficult terrain. Here are their descendants in Corumbá, typical west Brazil town: Negroid in colour and earth-ease, Indian in subtle, non-intellectual sensibility, Caucasian in skull structure. Certainly not African, not Indian, and not European, they are the new race of Brazil.

The town is neat, dull, and—despite the swamps and the mosquitoes—healthy. (There are plenty of mosquitoes. I write this in the dining room of a boarding house above the River Paraguay. Every window, every door is shut against mosquitoes—screens have not reached this continent; yet the table is alive with insects, the air hums with them, the naked electric bulb is black with their swarming. When I awoke this morning, a spider as large as two

silver dollars stood on the wall just above my shoulder. When I shook my slippers before putting them on, another spider fell out. Always examine your shoes in the tropics: they are a favourite trysting place for scorpions. The cockroaches in the kitchen are bigger than tablespoons.)

The level of living is far higher than in Bolivian Santa Cruz.

A delegation of the town's leaders, including the Mayor, the newspaper editor and the Port Authority, come to see me, and afford me a chance to gauge their shrewd and quiet adaptation to a lush land subtly suffused with the destiny of power. These provincials lack the nervousness of so many leaders in Rio and São Paulo, who have imbibed false race doctrines from Count Gobineau and the Germans. They take me to a fiesta in the public square: I see the marching children of Corumbá—thousands: the girls in springlike blue and rose sweaters with white shorts, the lads trying hard to be as solemn as their uniforms. A priest harangues them, talking exclusively of the Republic. Faultlessly, under the direction of a military band, they sing the complicated national anthem. They are submissive; they are firmly rooted.

In every shop, in every café of the town,* hangs a picture (usually a poor one) of President Vargas.

East, north and south from where I stand, lies Brazil. Of its more than three and a quarter million square miles, two million are forest. The rest is mostly a jungle of water, undulant prairie, the horned woods of the angry sertão. "We are an archipelago," Oswaldo Aranha said to me: tiny islands of man, he meant, within the green forest sea. A good metaphor for a mere statesman, it omits an essential point. The islands of an archipelago, one pictures sharply distinct from the sea, as earth from water. The green sea of Brazil not alone suffuses the island habitations, the villages and towns; it is the flesh and substance of every man and woman. Brazil is Forest.

To understand the Brazilian, think of the tree. The tree is deep in the earth. It will not move but to sway with the wind and rain and to aspire sunward. Think of the tree, not alone, but infinitely surrounded by the other trees of the forest. It stands submissive and yet fighting; it stands crowded and yet wondrously independent, with its own roots, with trunk and leaf, with its own steadfast sunward march. What is the colour of the tree? Is it black like its roots, brown like its bole, green like its leaf, pied like its blooms? Is it all of these? And where is its soul? In the dark loam where its roots cling? In the blue and golden air of its day? In its night? Perhaps in all of these together.

There have been few world cultures; and of these, few that were tropical forest cultures. Not Egypt, not China, not Israel, Greece or Rome; not Byzantium, not medieval Europe. Only India. In

* This is true of every town, every hamlet of the nation.

America, not the Toltec, Zapotec, Mixtec, Aztec; not the Peruvian. Only the Maya of Yucatan and Guatemala. These were all pre-science cultures, communities without the technical tools to combat the aggressive, hostile Forest. The way of India was withdrawal before the indomitable forest foe; was to win victory for the human spirit by an absolute vaulting from the domain of the body—even from the mind as part of the body. The alternative, the Hindus might have said, was Africa, where man grew dark in sweet submission to the forest; or the east slope of the Andes, where man becomes an animal, half puma and half wolf. Or possibly the Maya, whose whole culture was a swan song ere they succumbed before those tough plainsmen, the Aztecs, and those still tougher seamen, the Spaniards.

Brazil is a new challenge to the world: to a world of machines, science and rationalist knowledge; yet a world cut from its own bloodroot, built upon the fear of the blood's heat and escape; a world whose one way with the Forest of the land and of the soul, has been to slay it.

Or shall we rather say: at this great tragic turning from its ways, which have been disaster, the world challenges Brazil.

As we go slowly through Brazil, slowly into the man and woman of Brazil, let us take along the key: the Forest. We will find it unlocks a thousand mysteries. Go into a store, for instance, of any Brazilian town from Corumbá to the coast: note the peculiar crowding of the merchandise: rich or poor, plentiful or scarce, from cloth to canned foods, it obeys a strange individualist and cumulative logic of arrangement—a forest logic as of the underbrush and the shrubs and the trees. Follow this woman out of the store. In the street she meets another woman; she shifts her shopping basket on her hip, and they talk. Their voices murmurous as leaves in a soft wind, their eyes deep as shadow, their minds, whose harmony is the individual touching and accepting its close neighbour . . . have a forest texture. The strength of the Brazilian is the strength of the rooted, slow-growing tree. The strength of Brazil has been the organic, apparently mindless march of the great Forest.

Do not ride the metaphor to death. Let it unobtrusively go with us. . . .

The history of Brazil—its colonization, its slavocracy, its independence, its bloodless gradual freeing of the Negro, its easeful shift from Empire to Republic—has been amazingly distinct from the processes of Spanish America and the United States. The first thought that comes, is that this history—unlike the others of our hemisphere—had been unheroic. The Portuguese were settlers rather than conquistadores; indeed the first exploits in the land, such as the penetration of the Amazon and the voyage from the Andes down the river to the sea, were performed by Spaniards.

The Portuguese, with plenty of Jews among them, spread out along the coast and tried to make money with sugar and tobacco. For a hundred years, the mother country was more interested in her far richer East Indian possessions. Then, in the interior, gold and diamonds were discovered; Portugal grew warmer.

Came the century of the *bandeirantes*; and the news that sugar, a delicacy to sweeten the tables of all Europe, was more remunerative than gold. The Indians, drafted to work the cane, made poor slaves. With the active aid of the British (the greatest slave dealers always), Negroes were brought across the narrow sea from Africa. The Portuguese came without women; they took Indians and Africans for their beds. When the Church told them they should marry, they made wives of the children of those first guilty, but blessed unions: the charming *caboclas* and *mulattas*. Sugar boomed. The northern states grew rich. *Bahía* became the capital of a plantation world far richer than our own South. But its greatest wealth was its lack of strain between the races.

There were sporadic slave rebellions and insurrections; in some cases the runaway blacks even set up temporary "republics" called *quilombos*, in the jungle or *sertão*. They were led usually by black Moslem intellectuals, freed craftsmen of the cities. On the big estates, there was peace: tenderness and organic functioning between the *casa grande* of the master and the *senzala* of the servants.

Comparative lack of strain was the coefficient of the difference from our own slave South. We too bred with the Negresses; but fought the passion and ostracized its children. Hence fear, which is the fruit of the denial of human feelings.

Fear marked the growth of our world, fear of different kinds, north and south. Want of fear marked the growth, through the first three centuries, of Brazil's mixed population. Everybody took it easy. There was food for every child; there was at least one woman for every man. Of course, there was theft, there was cruel exploitation, there was murder: these at times are natural expressions. There was no rape; almost no case of it is known in Brazil's history. And as revolutionary ideas spread through the Americas from France and England, the stress in Brazil was more on the ideas than on the revolution. Abortive rebellions, like the one in which *Tiradentes* of *Minas Geraes* lost his life, and like the slave insurrections of *Bahía* and *Pernambuco*, were not serious. The north coast colonies paid so well that the French and the Dutch grasped at them. But Brazil by this time was already inhabited by Brazilians. When they were pushed out of *Pernambuco* and *Pará*, as one may cut down the border of a forest, back they came. Nowhere could Dutch or French or English retain a foothold against the imperious human forest.

In its slow way the human forest spread west; chiefly from *São Paulo* and *Minas Geraes*. And from this near west, it followed the great river, *São Francisco*, northward, settling the *sertão*, which

became the homeland of cattle. The settlers murdered the Indians in the thick wood—and married them; clear to the River Paraguay, where the Guaranís held them; clear up the Amazon, where the Spaniards on the Andes held them. The action, long, steadfast, imperceptible, unheroic, spread until Brazil was half the continent.*

There were endless skirmishes, of course; with Indians, with Dutch, French and Spaniards.† Few were concise enough to merit the name war. Brazil's statesmen and diplomats, not her soldiers, stamped her far-flung boundaries; their chief weapon, not the sword, but the law of *uti posseditis*.

The independence and the survival of Brazil as one nation instead of the twenty of Spain's American colonies, were the issue also of a blind, organic movement. The rationalist might call it chance or the ability to take advantage of chance; the Yankee might call it good hard business sense.

Napoleon invaded Spain. Portugal's king saw what was coming and made a deal with the British. On November 30, 1808, the day the French under Marshal Junot marched into Lisbon, the king, his court and fifteen thousand influential Portuguese, sailed over the horizon headed for Brazil. The terms of the bargain were British free trade and exclusive markets with Brazil; and in return the British vessels which bore the king and his crowd westward.

The Brazilian provinces, the four thousand miles of coast from Pará to Rio Grande do Sul, and the thousand miles of forest west to Mato Grosso, had had little more communication with one another than Spain's colonies from Mexico to Argentina. The crown had held Spain's colonies together. At the moment of disintegration, with the king gone and Napoleon in Madrid, they fell irresistibly apart. At this parallel moment in Brazil, the king was there—right there—to keep the provinces from flying asunder, as they wished and as they threatened.

You may call it Portugal's political genius, with her daughter Brazil as beneficiary. What will you call this? . . . The second and third reasons why Spain's colonies became separate nations, were that they had developed deep and strong individual national lives, and that they had become, in their absorption of French, British and American liberalism, far too modern to tolerate a new monarchy in lieu of the old one. Brazil's vast provinces were less intellectually advanced (they still are); the cultural life of each was less individualized, far more amorphous. Therefore, with the old king, Don João, in their midst, the little republican and separatist movements

* Brazil's area: 3,286,170 square miles; South America's area: 7,570,000 square miles. Brazil's population: about 45,000,000; South America's population: about 80,000,000.

† The capital of Brazil was shifted in 1760 southward from Bahia to Rio de Janeiro because of the threat of the Spaniards on the Rio de la Plata. Portugal claimed what is now Uruguay.

from Pará to Rio Grande do Sul were snuffed out like candles; the monarchy went on.

From 1808 to 1821, while Spain's colonies bled with revolution, Brazil prospered. Britain handled her exports and her imports. Europe became used to sugar and tobacco. And the little caboclos and cafusos* in the Brazilian hinterland got used to Birmingham shirts and Manchester gingham. Then, with the same ease (Britain having swept Napoleon into the ocean), the old king sailed back to Portugal (clearing out the Brazilian treasury of all its gold), and his son, Dom Pedro, remained as Emperor of the Brazilians.

To recapitulate: Brazil, in contradistinction from the fragmenting of Spain's far-flung Empire, owed her unity (1) to the good chance of Portugal's king scampering from Napoleon across the sea, (2) to Britain's supply of ships in exchange for a market, and (3) to the backwardness, in modern ideas and independence, of the Brazilian provinces.

The same growth, blind, organic, forest-like, solved the problem of the slaves. Brazil had her abolitionists at least as early as we. Like all Brazilian life, they were moderate and satisfied with slow advances. But were they really slow? By 1822 three-fourths of the mulattoes in the land were free; in 1828 Brazil had four hundred thousand free mulattoes, one hundred and sixty thousand free *pretos* or blacks. This was surely an advance over the United States. Yet millions of fresh slaves kept flowing in from Africa, chiefly in British ships. In 1831 the slave trade was formally abolished. But Britain kept on shipping the blacks in for twenty years. In 1850 public opinion was mature for its abolition, and the trade stopped forever. In the same year two more laws were passed. Every slave woman with the birth of her tenth child became free; every slave could purchase his freedom from his master at the price his master had paid to buy him.

By that time there were far more free men of colour in Brazil than in our southern states; and it had become a matter of prestige for the rich owners in the great sugar districts of Bahía, Pernambuco and Maranhão, in Minas Geraes and São Paulo, to emancipate worthy servants. In all the cities, free Negroes were tradesmen, scriveners and craftsmen. Some even had slaves of their own. In 1850 a deputy in the National Chamber introduced a bill to abolish slavery. It was not passed—not for thirty-eight years, in accord with the Brazilian rhythm. In 1867, just half-way along, the Emperor, in an address to the Chamber, spoke of “the ideal of abolition.” In 1871 came the legal “freeing of the womb” of all slave women: henceforth there were no newborn slaves in Brazil. The Heiress Apparent to the Empire, Princess Isabel, became a leader in the abolition movement, together with such conservative statesmen as Joaquim Nabuco. Castro Alves, poet of Bahía, sang

* The cafuso is a mixed-blood of Indian and Negro.

the great lyrics of freedom. Voluntary manumission became as popular as his poems.

In 1883 the state of Ceará emancipated all its slaves, as did Amazonas and Maranhão a year later. (It was as if North Carolina and Mississippi had voluntarily freed their slaves in 1850.) 1885 saw a new national law: all slaves at sixty became free. In 1886 the Army in formal session of its ranking officers declared itself abolitionist and republican and instructed its officers stationed throughout the land to refuse aid to slave owners for the recapture of run-aways. That year alone ten thousand slaves left the coffee fields of São Paulo and were helped to escape by the police. The rate of voluntary manumission swelled to a hundred thousand a year. Men of colour, if they were men of value, not only occupied places of honour in all the professions; they were invited to the palace functions. At one ball, a lady refused to dance with the famous coloured engineer, Andre Rebouças; the Empress Apparent, Princess Isabel, gave him her hand in the next mazurka. There were still slaves in Brazil; there were also men of colour who were leading poets, musicians, engineers, doctors, statesmen and priests. In 1888, when the last slaves were freed by act of the National House, only six hundred thousand remained in the whole land.

This was nearly a generation later than the freeing of our slaves. Brazil with its slow, organic process had been the most backward country to abolish servitude. But the process cost no blood, caused no fierce sectional conflicts or resentments. The big slave men of Bahia grumbled; and took their revenge by permitting the Empire, which had encouraged abolition, to fade into the new Republic. But the abolitionists inflicted no curse like our Reconstruction on half the country: a "reconstruction" from which our South has not yet by any means recovered.

The following year, 1889, by the same blind process, the nation awoke to find itself a Republic.* Of Brazil's Empire, Bartolomé Mitre, President of Argentina, founder of *La Nación*, and his country's greatest historian: a man, therefore, of measured words, had said, "It is the only democracy in South America." During its entire life-span, the Empire had harboured republicans. Many were Masons, but the Masons in Brazil were not hostile to the Church. Many were positivists, followers of Auguste Comte. They had their press in the major cities, which, with the blessings of the Emperor, rabidly attacked the Empire. In Minas Geraes, there were fifty-six republican clubs, forty-eight in São Paulo, thirty-two in Rio Grande do Sul. Benjamin Constant was their great theorist;

* When the Princess Regent, Isabel (the Emperor was in France taking the waters) signed the Congressional Act freeing the last slaves, she smiled into the face of the Prime Minister. "We won the fight," she said. "Yes, Your Highness," he replied. "You have won the fight and lost the throne." This Prime Minister was the Baron de Cotegipe. He was a mulatto.

Deodoro da Fonseca, Ruy Barbosa and the coloured Sampaio Ferraz and Aristides Lobo, were among the leading republican politicians. You would assume that these agitators gradually won the people, and at the psychological moment neutralized the imperial army. That is the usual revolutionary process. Not in Brazil. Not the people; not a single group of the political or intellectual republicans, made the Republic. *The army did it.* The Emperor, a sick man, had just returned from Paris. Princess Isabel had been Regent. Her husband was a Frenchman of the House of Orleans, and not liked. If Dom Pedro had had a son like his father, the first Emperor, the Republic might not have come. The army announced to the republicans the precise date for the rebellion. The republicans were amazed; also they were disturbed, for the army told them that when it had done its work, they would have to take over. Dom Pedro peacefully signed his abdication and sailed back to Paris, where two years later he died, full of years and the affection of his people.

The army in Brazil has always been a liberal body, with men of colour among its officers. When the Republic nearly collapsed in the 1920's, the army initiated the movement for progressive reconstruction. It was called *tenentismo* because the lieutenants engineered it. Prestes, future communist, now imprisoned by Vargas, was of that movement. Today for the first time in Brazil's history, reactionary ideas and notions of caste threaten Brazil's army. But that is getting ahead of our story.

The Empire had continued the work of the Portuguese monarchy, in binding the states together. They had enjoyed real autonomy in local matters, always under the control of the monarch. His real function was that of moderator; he kept the orchestra in time and in tune, without originating either. This he was able to do because—with Brazil's usual luck—he, like his father before him, was a remarkably sane and careful man, imbued with a deep love of country. With him gone, the old separatist tendencies rose again. The new constitution was an extreme federalism. Each state had its legislative, judicial, police and executive autonomy. The central government could interfere only in the specific rights reserved to it, or when appealed to.

At once with Dom Pedro gone, the great states proved stronger than the federal power. The sugar states in the north, which had once ruled Brazil, in their decadence wished to rule themselves; the rubber states were too remote and too rich to be controlled from Rio. The southern states, Minas Geraes, São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul and Rio de Janeiro, kept the federal power in their own hands; but only at the price of constant bargaining among themselves and of political blackmail to the north, which had to be perpetually bribed to obey Rio.

Every few years one or another state threatened revolution. This endemic unbalance was exacerbated after the first world war by

the economic collapse of São Paulo, whose immense coffee industry had made it the country's economic leader. The hazardous equilibrium of the Republic foundered. The army rebelled, aiming with labour and the intellectuals at a more progressive regime; the north, still traditional, refused to swing with the south, and threatened to fly off on its own inertial orbit. The success of Getulio Vargas in 1930, and after, may be epitomized in his own words, as he privately explained the situation to me one afternoon over a casual cup of coffee in Guanabara Palace:

"The Republic lost the unity of the Empire. It was necessary to recover it. Bourgeois federal democracy could not do it. I have done it."

How he has done it, at the price of what evils and what dangers, we shall see when we return to Rio. Again we must not get ahead of our story. We are still on the west bank of the Paraguay, looking out upon the vast, thick wood that is Brazil. In its slow story we observe the four centuries of an organic power whose constant symbol is the Forest: an organic sureness, an irresistible growth, a rootedness, a fertile and dark sweetness, an ineluctable obedience to destiny deeper than mind and will. We recall the sense of destiny in the Brazilians we have met: leaders like Nabuco, Aranha, Freyre, Lins do Rego, Portinari; and in the humble men and women of the streets, and of the country roads.

In speaking of Brazil, it has been necessary constantly to speak of the Negro. Millions were brought in on slave ships. Today there is no Negro in Brazil.

The word is not used. In towns like Bahia there are a few *Africanos*: far fewer than you might think, for the old folks have a way of boastfully lying about their birthplace. There are plenty of *pretos*, blacks, along the Littoral from Rio to Recife. Beyond and inland, they dwindle. But everywhere there are *pardos*—browns, *cabras*—between black and brown, *morenos* down to *brancos de Bahia*. In Brazil they are all Brazilians, and the census since 1890 does not classify the colour of skins, any more than our census the colour of eyes. It is safe to say, however, that seventy to eighty-five per cent of Brazil has a part in the blood which came from Africa: the virgin Forest.

Here in Mato Grosso, there are few men and women in the streets we would call Negro. The Indian is a far stronger strain. The African stayed eastward in the sugar fields of the north coast, in the mines of Minas and Bahia, in the coffee plantations of São Paulo. The bandeirantes were themselves largely *mamelucos* or *caboclos*, and married the Indians of the Forest. These Indians differ in temperament, of course. Those of the Amazonas were pacific, with a few like the Aymaras, whose ferocity was legendary. Those in the sertões were more warlike. The Negroes also differed among themselves. Vianna names twenty-seven distinct African nations brought

to Brazil, from as far north as the Sudan and as far south as Angola; who differed, according to him, from "repulsive ugliness to beauty." Nevertheless, there are basic traits of adjustment to the earth, of relative development in sensibility over intellectual will, which generalize the African. And here, in this firm, fertile race of Mato Grosso . . . by blood barely African at all, traits are palpable which we ascribe racially to the African, symbolically to the Forest: the still virgin people of the Forest.

THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

When the Amazon pours into the Atlantic, it bursts the salt sea asunder and for two hundred miles makes it brackish. But when the Tapajóz, a river of a thousand miles, streams its ten-miles-wide blue water into the Amazon, it dies instantly. A line straight as if drawn by a ruler marks the end of the blue river; the Amazon—colour of earth, colour of blood—swallows it and flows unchanged to the east.

At this miraculous meeting is Santarem, once the principal town of the Amazons. It lies on the sand-rimmed Tapajóz;* and one steps from the beached skiffs and the anchored sailboats into a square cool with palms. The church façade has the lightness of Portugal; but within is a bloom of colour laden as the flamboyant trees; and a black Christ of wood near the door, tender and elemental like the hand that carved him. On the palms of the square are birds; under them, on the benches, are schoolgirls, chattering. The stores of the town are crowded, each a grove. Over the hills sprawl wooden huts on stilts. Santarem is toasted and crisp in the sweet trade wind.

The Amazon is a maze of waters with a mainstream running through them. One could sail from the Andes to the Atlantic through subsidiary streams: *paranámirins*, *furos*, *igarapés*; and not once touch the main body. One could repeat this journey many times, in different tracteries of lakes, inlets, canals. And all this is only the heart of the sea, fed by vast tributary veins (five of them larger than the Tapajóz); their plain twice larger than the basin of the Missouri-Mississippi. Some of the greater rivers south are Tocantins, Xingu, Tapajóz, Madeira, Beni, Purús, Jurua, Jutahy, Yacarana, Ucayali, Marañón: their wombs in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Mato Grosso. North, the rivers flow from the Guianas; less long except the immense Rio Negro, whose sources, many of them uncharted, feed the jungles of Colombia and Venezuela.

The system is indeed a mediterranean sea, a dynamic sea, tumultuously tided. With the rains, each year, the waters rise from thirty-five to seventy feet, submerging islands, sweeping and swallowing trees, soil, animals, houses; making the waters colour

* Eighty miles up the river is Ford's rubber plantation, Belterro, referred to by the Brazilians as Fordlandia.

of earth and blood because the continent is in them. This is the tide of the sea. Swifter are its seasons, changing three times each day. The morning in Amazon's forest is spring. Noon and afternoon are summer: a caldron of green fume. The nights are autumn. Only winter, which is nature's sleep, is lacking. There is no place for sleep in this treacherous, too fertile union of earth, water and celestial fire.

The trees visibly fight their way toward air. From the sky they appear a rubbery green solid, veined like flesh beneath a magnifying glass. But enter the Forest and this simplicity is gone. Each step is an angry maze of struggling lianas, ferns, flowering moss and bush, rising from the dead leaves in conflagration; flaming to brush and brake which writhe for air among themselves, under the lesser trees. Overhead, the forest giants, almost leafless to the tops, burst into foliage that makes a solid firmament through which no direct ray of the sun can pierce. And all this life is only of the surface. Within the brush are innumerable insects, snakes, lizards; within the trees are birds and monkeys. And on the wings of the mosquitoes are the lethal germs of malaria and yellow fever.

Not less dynamic, the outward form of the Amazon as the continent flows upon it. From the air one sees it well: the great rivers, each an individual theme of shape and colour, majestically swing into the main water and vanish; the little rivers between, like flutes and violins, shapen and sweeten the immensely moving, yet immobile music.

But to see this world in its dimensions, one must not only fly; one must also float on the waters, feel the heave of them. One must go ashore, and leave the shore, and lose the river in the labyrinthine seepage of the forest. Even in the Amazons, there are grey-brown verdureless lands. East of Gurupá before Monte Alegre (a white town on the brow of a hill) the forest recedes in *campos geraes*, plains, and the waters become lakes. At high tide the lakes disappear, the fields too, in the main body which spreads northward to antediluvian mountains. They are table-topped; some glacier, steel-sharp, must have planed them. They are the forefront of the Guianas.

Few Negroes in this forest. The two states that hold the Amazon sea . . . Pará and Amazonas, over a million and a quarter square miles, about two million inhabitants . . . have few Negroes; and these few in the towns of the coast: Belém, Castanhal and Bragança. In the forest itself live Indians, sparse, fragile, hot as birds. Birds and monkeys are the best-adjusted fauna. The monkeys are of innumerable species, mostly small. The wood has no large animal except the docile tapir, whose hide is hard as mahogany. Only life which swings from tree to tree or wings between the branches can prosper. The water itself is a better home for big bodies. There is the lontra, the river otter which is a seal gone quadruped; there are the piraricú and boto, weighing hundreds of pounds, which the Indians

hunt with bow and arrow ; there are dolphins and countless varieties of turtles. The Indian himself does not thrive, has never thrived in this world. Compared to his brothers, brilliant or substantial, on the west slopes of the Andes or even to the Indians of the sertões and of the mild Paraguay wood, the Amazon Indian is weak, fragile, nervous, shallow ; his eyes are of a hunted beast, just intelligent enough to live a life of perpetual escaping.

He has created no culture, all his energy is submerged in the battle for bare survival with a world whose furious energy of fire, water, and wood is too much for him. Compared to him, the Negro of the African forest is a great tree : quiet upon his mighty roots and swaying in the sky with a strong music. But in this forest there are no Negroes.

Manaus, capital of the State of Amazonas, a city of ninety thousand which once had nearly two hundred thousand, lies on the Rio Negro about seven miles northwest of its end in the main stream. Before we come to it, we see the immense Madeira move in from the southwest, bearing with it Bolivia and the River Beni, Peru . . . Cuzco, citadel of the Incas, and the River Madre de Dios. The Rio Negro seems larger than the Amazon, which, swinging off at an angle, appears to be the tributary branch. This illusion doubtless made the Portuguese give the Amazon beyond the Negro another name : Solimões. Go to the meeting of the rivers in a small boat, but sturdy to breast the churned waters, and the error is evident. The Rio Negro, like its name, is black. When the screw of our launch stirs it, the water turns colour of rust, as if it contained iodine or iron. It moves in a huge, lake-still expanse, currentless, black, to its unexpected death. The Amazon here is comparatively narrow. In its swift pulse are clumps of earth, some with whole trees, and a spill of branches. The two rivers meet : the black against the cinnamon and saffron. There is a belt of whirlpool waves and the black river dies forever.

Just before Manaus, we pass an island. (Vinicius de Moraes, the Brazilian poet who is my companion, and I, are the guests of the Governor of Amazonas, and we ride in his launch.) Our hosts tell us the legend of the island. Everyone who passes it, going west to Manaus or to the rubber jungles of the Upper Amazon, leaves his conscience behind him on the island. From its solid hardwood maze in which the sultry consciences smoulder, I see the palms leap high, thrusting forth frantic hands. What a heavy and dolorous burden on the island !

The once haughty rubber capital of the world is on a high bank of the Negro, surrounded by trackless forest. Here are figures which tell the city's story :— Amazon rubber production in 1912, 40,000 tons ; in 1917, 60,000 tons ; in 1941, 16,000 tons ; in 1942 (despite costly American "efficiency" delegations and Henry Ford), under 16,000 tons.

Manaus has the odour of decay. It smells of greed, exploitation and shrinkage. Within the hot vapours of the forest it is a bleak, a cold city. The shops are crowded with the finery of twenty years ago: porcelain, jewellery, ladies' wear of the days before the East Indies rationalized the production of rubber. Communication has broken down. Few ships climb up the thousand miles from Belém. Yet the transatlantic liners used to come here straight from the French ports, before Rio and Buenos Aires; bringing Grand Opera troupes, concert virtuosi and the world's most elegant whores disguised as Countesses. Now salt is hard to buy, gas is rare. Several times during our brief stay our hotel lacked coffee. Huge supplies of *castanha* (Brazil nut), the most nourishing food in the world, rot on the wharves. Jute booms; but rubber is an unsolved problem.

The town still clings to its architectural splendours. The Governor's house, *Palacio Rio Negro*, is a sight to behold; far more resplendent than the Governor's house in Pará. Its immense rooms gleam in varnished panels; heavy upholstered furniture, bric-a-brac in pandemonium, colossal gold frames holding bad paintings, in every niche statues of marble and majolica, elaborate scrolled stairs, make it a forest of bad taste. The partitions between rooms reach only halfway to the ceilings, so that cool airs may blow through the vast spaces, and a shrewd young man sits at an immense mahogany desk, Governor Maia.*

The town's prize relic is, of course, the theatre, famous—they will tell you—the world over. It faces a square of cool dignity: a classical church, the palms, the vista down a broad avenue to the river. The proportions of the auditorium are good; everything else in the theatre is preposterous. There are offensive bracket chandeliers of intricate glass; loges of plush; yellowish, ornate columns; an immense central chandelier of glass brass filigree; and over all, the ceiling aburst with a flowery silky painting of the school of art patronized by rich brothels in the 1890's. The foyer is Amazonian woods and Italian marbles, tortured by a bad Italian artist into bad French rococo. The decorations are stylized motifs of Amazonian themes. (I found one door of Guaraná leaves by a local worker, which was lovely.) The halls are caverns of bad painting, of Amazonian animals and humans—livid girls and livid pumas, among columns of wrought iron, filigree walls and a virulent ceiling: the work of an imported European artist. The theatre, which once received the greatest celebrities of Paris, has been unused for years. But the authorities desperately keep it in condition. It reminded me of the corrupt Negro one may see in Harlem: an empty face in a pink shirt, panama hat, diamond-studded yellow necktie, patent leather boots with spats and a mother-of-pearl cane. Bad taste at once naïve and brutal.

See it in its setting, the bleak Amazon city, cold in the heat, dead

* Vargas changed the name of Governor of the states to Interventor. There is one exception, I believe; either São Paulo or Minas Geraes.

in the cyclonic tropic life. The workers' district is Constantinopolis: wood houses on stilts with no grace. The Mercado is the beach and the rancid streets above it: caboclos in rowboats unloading their fruit, their manioc and meat, bargaining for salt and the cheap rum called *cachaça*. The folk, which is all caboclo (Portuguese and Indian) is low-keyed, languid, silent, ugly with its struggle. The children do not sport, do not play; they are too weary. More than half have the swelled stomachs of the *amarelão*, intestinal hookworm. Malaria is endemic. The women are without beauty. The folk, the same in blood as Belém's, lacks its vigour: malaria is worse, the struggle is far greater. Vinicius and I went to be vaccinated against yellow fever; and stood in line with the whole town: the humble women, the naked children, the morose men. (The surgeons were swift, courteous, hygienic.) These are the whites and the Indian folk—not equal to the Forest.

Everywhere grow the *seringueiras*, the trees whose blood is rubber. Trails are cut through the wilderness to where they rise in clusters. In Belterra, near Santarem, Henry Ford has his plantation along East Indian lines. But with this exception, the tree is hunted in its wild home. The rubber workers live a life of incredible privation. There is no food for them in the perpetual green hell: farina of manioc, dried meat from Rio Grande do Sul, dried fish if they are lucky. They are prey to the ferocity of disease, insects, venomous snakes, and the wet, dark flame of forest. The tree they hunt, the *seringueira*, has an animal grace not unworthy of comparison with the grace of the forest puma. It also is pale, almost white, with creamy yellow and ochre hues . . . pastel hues . . . on its live trunk. The branches aspire upward, slender and crowded. The tree has an elastic movement like the life of rubber. Most of the trees in the Amazon forest are pale and ghostly; there is a subterranean cavern note to this crowded and malignant nature. The *seringueira*, ghostly and graceful, is the queen of Amazonas.

Manaus used to be called Barra. The Manaus were an Indian tribe unusually warlike for this region, who brought their captives from the more docile tribes to Barra, where they sold them to the Portuguese as slaves. The city is named after the slave-selling tribe . . . well named. There are no Negroes in this pallid world, whose life is a perpetual lost battle against the ferocity of forest.

The rowboats have come a long way up and down the rivers; slender they look on the wide water. The men paddle, the women sit in the stern and bow among their riches: *cuciá* (gourds), *fruta pão* (bread fruit), cacao (huge cocoa beans), bananas, perhaps the blood of a few *seringueiras*, a little grain of *milho* (corn) and other fruits unnamed by us: *cumarú*, *araça*, *oiti*, the savoury *pupunha*; and always, of course, the manioc root, bread of the Brazilian poor, and a poor bread since it is weak in gluten.

It is urgent to leave Manaus and visit the homes of these humble folk. True, the mosquitoes are a dangerous scourge when the breeze lulls; and the *piúm*, a tiny blood-sucking fly, takes on at daybreak when the mosquito leaves off. But Manaus is a city I cannot love; my hate for it is a disease less easily avoided than the malaria or yellow fever. The hate is after all the unaware response to a hurt loveliness. Seek out the loveliness. Go to the poor *fazendas*.

First we turn down the Amazon from the black Negro, and skirt a shore of bamboo, cacaueiros, abiareira, lavender-flowered marirana, banana trees with leaves eighteen feet long, and an occasional grove of seringueiras. We nose our boat into the soft mud and leap ashore. The fazendeiro, chosen at random, is, like them all, a caboclo. He wears the sweaty remnant of a shirt, pants that look more like drawers, and a huge straw hat. Look at the face well; beneath the grime, the weariness and the sparse beard, you will find sensitivity; in the eyes a wistful, intelligent poignance. We stand in the shade of a wide cuieiro tree laden with enormous gourds, in the unbearable damp heat of afternoon, with the mosquitoes already sharpening their swords about us. The man's wife joins us: a worn ancestress at thirty-five. They show us the path to the pond beneath their home. Here lives an old crocodile they have been unable to kill. A few months ago, it lopped off the head of their latest born, a baby girl. The home is a bare wood barrack built on stilts, with hammocks and a brazier.

Now we turn west along the Solimões or Upper Amazon and then off into one of the innumerable tributaries, the Curary. The shores are lined with fazendas, a house every quarter-mile or less. A smaller stream smothered in canebrake and mangrove, dawdles into the Curary; and here we shall go fishing.

Night has come. In the Amazonian tropic it is hard to sense its coming. It has been there all along, in the black and the blood-brown waters, in the never-broken shadows of the wood. Sun has kept it at bay, one beast cowing another. Now the sun in a rut of red bursts over the horizon and is gone; night leaps forward. Its motion is perpendicular. It starts from where it has been crouching, close to the sullen earth; soon it has conquered all the region of trees; then the sky (the clouds first clawed by it) is covered.

We have been joined by some caboclo boys. We paddle in a small boat, and they wade out through the shallow water with their fine nets. This is dangerous business because of the *piranha*, a small, chunky, bloodthirsty fish which attacks man in throngs, biting him to pieces. But the *piranha* makes good eating; and we want a mess of them for breakfast. The fishing desultorily goes on all night, with the men coming and going for forty winks. The mosquitoes take no sleep: lustful as men, they fly at us in waves, in armadas, in clouds, in firmaments. The waters kiss the muddy shore in endless intercourse, and the trees waken, bringing the sky down to their roots, bedded in river. By midnight the heat has gone reverberating

starward; earth-coolness reigns. From the jungle breathes its deep and melancholy sorrow.

Dawn and early morning are a truce. Night, the one enemy, has gone; day, the fiercer enemy, has come, but not yet trained its fires upon earth. The world has an ephemeral innocence of spring. The breeze is a freshet; the mangrove murmurs susurrant coolness; the birds of the morning leap like light, which the crescendo heat of day will turn to fever. The boys have cooked while we napped. We sit on the awninged deck and eat the man-eating *piranha*, and wash it down with the Brazilian coffee whose bitterness is too true to be borne by most Brazilians: the pungent, potent bitterness of their own earth. They make the coffee lie, sweetening it with sugar. I drink mine neat, without sugar.

The sugar does not lie when you suck it from the cane: earth then, pungent too, and subtly flavoured with sun and moon and the sweat of toiling life, comes with sweetness in the mouth. Only the white crystals, rarefied from the cane, are liars.

We visit the fazendas on the Curary. There is a monotone in them as in their world. The same bare houses of wood raised from the wet earth; the same hammocks, the same farmyards with a few pigs, chickens and cows; the same manioc fields, groves of banana and cacao, the same backlog ponds and inlets . . . igarapes, the dwelling place of crocodiles and jacarés, the stocky alligators. We saw one house where the fazendeiro and his wife had a bed. This was a caboclo of extraordinary energy: a little man with a nut-hard, nut-sweet face. He showed us round his farm, and we stumbled over a dead calf, still warm. Probably a snake had bitten it. A lizard, two feet long, emerald-sapphire flashed away. With reserved pride he showed us his seringual, his grove of rubber trees. His children were all young. I marvelled at his diligence, running that farm alone.

Like the bed he slept on, he was the exception. This folk of white and Indian blood is beaten. The interminable daily round of morning spring, green fever afternoon, night swarming with insects and disease; the ceaseless monotone of rains flooding the river and of dry sun receding the waters, baring the mud and the malaria: these men have not the ethnic equipment to withstand this smouldering world. They live exacerbated, they live brave, they live beaten. The Indian has flowered in cool lands, or in hot lands cleaned and refreshed, like Yucatan, by cyclonic winds. The white and red man's sap thins in this watery green furnace. What they have done, the holding their own to the extent they have done in the Amazons, proves them a race of heroes.

Most pitiful is the swift beauty of their women. The young girls are orchids, are birds, in the extraordinary stylization of their transparent saffron skin over the fragile skull. Their chalice breasts in shifts of dirty cotton bear a burden, in those bare hammocked homes, more terrible than the immemorial burden in kinder

climates of their mothers. Their loveliness, in its brief moment, sings perfect but ephemeral form. This is hard enough to bear—this beauty brief as the cool dawn of their day. But even harder to bear is the sullen, hysterical need of their men. The caboclo possesses his woman with a love that is not tenderness, but frenzy of despairing knowledge. This hostile nature is no home for him. Frantic, he seeks security where he can find it: in the vaginal home, in the woman: and knowing the swift passing of her loveliness. Therefore, he allows her no girlhood and no respite till old age swiftly overtakes her blooming. And let her not dare look at another man! The monosexuality of North Brazil is the deep soul-sickness and homesickness of the man; and is the tenderness of the woman giving to the man his one surety, his one haven.

THE ANGRY LAND (THE SERTÃO)

The Amazon world is too much water; the sertão is too little East of Pará, Brazil bulges toward Africa. The first state, Maranhão, is still Amazon in soil and climate. Now comes a catastrophic change. The northeast winds drop their moisture on the coast and, moving inland, become carriers of drought. Piauí, Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Alagoas, tiny Sergipe and part of rich Bahía, are semi-arid. They have four zones tiered inland from the ocean, each with its own climate. First comes the *Praia*, the coast, fertile, except in the driest states, Piauí and Ceará. Next the *Mata*, woodland, which when cleared is the most productive. In the *Mata* are the great sugar lands of Bahía and Pernambuco. The *Mata* cradled the slave culture of Brazil and through the generations formed the ethos and the body of the people. From the *Mata*, the land rises, in some regions to three thousand feet; this is the temperate zone, the *Caatinga*. It is a country without palms or bananas; with trees tending to shrub and with the first straggling cactus. Its soil is fairly fertile for corn or cotton. Back of the *Caatinga*, at times surrounding it, is the Sertão: hundreds of thousands of square miles of it, west and southwest, across the mighty São Francisco River, across the Tocantins, into the Mato of Goyaz.

Sertão is not desert. It is an angry land of sparse rains which fail. With the rains the land blossoms, like the wild flowers in certain regions of the Rockies. The Sertão supports great herds of cattle; it grows cotton and a coarse substitute for cotton, *carudá*, the fibre of a sword-sharp cactus. It breeds the toughest of all Brazilians, the *sertanejo* or *sertanista*.

The sertão may lie without rain for two years; and the droughts come in sinister cycles of about a decade. The wells dry. The trees, most of them thorned, lose their leaves. The birds and the deer, the wild boar, the tapirs and the puma, even the emas . . . little ostriches . . . leave the country; soon the rodents have vanished.

The cattle stand in the corrals, their black tongues hanging;

until thirst or their master kills them. He does not leave. He cuts the pulp from the macambira cactus and feeds it to his family; he takes the fruit of the harsh icosetro; he digs the roots of a candalaria cactus, the manjacadú, for its drop of water. In the sertão grow subterranean trees, scarcely a gnarled metre of wood above the ground, with brilliant, exuberant leaves and gay blooms in the rain; but the root system is enormous. He goes down to the roots, looking for their water. Not till his children begin to die does he pack a few belongings on the last horse or mule and take to the road.

He may go to the coast; he may go south to the mines of Minas Geraes, or north and west into the rubber country. In Amazonas, we saw many families on the crowded river boats, bound for the remote regions of Acre. But soon or late the sertanejo returns. One day, in Fortaleza or in the seringuals of the Purús, he hears that it has rained in the home country. Next day he is gone. The Brazilians have a saying:

*O sertanejo anoitece, mas não amanhece.**

We saw the sertão in drought. Swiftly we had come to it, through the three zones. The rich Praia and Mata: palms, mangoes, groves of banana, snug homes of 'dobe and thatch in the arms of the red earth; trim sugar towns and mill towns for cotton and tobacco; commercial towns, chaotic and pulsant with crude life; villages cradled on the lush slopes under immense coconut palms; villages sprawling and striding like Negroes on a joy ride. With the Caatinga, the palms stop—and the Negroes. Dominant are the caboclos; but their leanness is not weak and beaten as in the Forest; it is a strong-fibred, sober toughness. The lush upland thins into cactus; the hills stiffen into mountains. Soon the trees are all gone. Groves, instead, of immense cactus. Brown patches of earth, not the lush red bottoms; the bush tangled and thorny.

The town, known as the gateway to the sertão, is Rio Branco. There is no river, white or otherwise, in this hinterland of Pernambuco; the name is for Brazil's famous nineteenth-century statesman. The white houses, with roofs tiled or thatched, lie as if transfixed by the noon sun which casts its diamond spears vertically downward. One feels that a bared head would be split by this gemmed heat. But it is not as deadly as the visitor from the temperate zone imagines. It is dry, it is clean, it is cleansing; one can give in to it and find in its fires a relaxing stimulus. The heat of the Forest, breeding disease, indolence and passion, is far more treacherous.

Da Cunha in his great book calls the sertão a perpetual winter; he has reference of course to the forbidding barrenness. But I suspect, like most Brazilians he knew little about winter. Winter in our temperate world is a season of rest and of peace. There are storms,

* "The man of the sertão spends the night and is gone in the morning."

of course; but they pass. For the most part, the snow sleeps gently on the fields; the grass and the stalks of the cut grain slumbering within it. The trees, leafless and lean, are at peace; the bare orchards stand in orderly somnambulance upon the white flank of the hill. The evergreens . . . balsams, the spruce, the pine, the hemlock . . . burn in stolid strength against the snow. In the great barns, the cattle and the horses take their ease in the sweet drench of the hay, the manure and their own warm bodies. A time of calm and respite is our winter, when the earth draws in its tenderness from man, and communes with itself.

The sertão's mood is anger. The cacti bare their stilettos. The mesquite and shrubs are horned furies. The trees writhe, stumble, trench themselves underground: teeth on every branch, and on every leaf a needle. Go a yard through the sertão; unless you ride armoured like a medieval knight, there will be blood on your leg and on the breast of your horse. The sertão fauna, like the plants, are armed: the horned toad, the wild peccary, the vipers, the hairy spiders. The land is never bare; never a blessing mantles it, like snow. The sun sends down its diamond lance and the massed wood, crouched close to earth, snarls back at the sun. The trees gyre; the earth with its sparse brown grass is rigid and sullen. The rocks are so hot, a touch will burn your finger. But when the sun goes, so sudden is the cold, that they split, the rigid earth cracks open.

The sertanejo, like his land, in many ways is different from the rest of Brazil. He is predominantly Portuguese and Indian, with a minor yet significant Negro strain; but many generations without new blood have stabilized him, harmonized his type into the most homogeneous of all Brazil. He is the result of two early immigrations into the sertão. The main stream was the bandeirantes of the south, who followed the São Francisco River from Minas Geraes northward, fanning out through the whole sertão. The minor stream were the coastal Negroes, the runaways, the rebels, the free mulattoes and the vagrant women. The sertanistas raised cattle and robbed. They fought the most warlike Indians of Brazil, and remained warlike. To this day the most lawless part of Brazil is the dry hinterland of northern Bahia and western Pernambuco. But the marauding was never petty. The itinerant individual, perhaps with crude diamonds in his pocket from the mines of Minas Geraes, was always safe in the sertão. The lawlessness would be the storming of a village, or a great feud between families, as in our Kentucky mountains. The main business of the sertão is cattle breeding. The honour of the sertanejo vaquero is as strict, according to his own conventions, as the gaucho's.

These tough men have deep sentiments and contradictory talents. Their love of their treacherous land is proverbial—and they are wanderers. Their songs share the complex, meaty fibre of all Brazil's music—and they make the best of Brazil's mechanics. They are a

deep folk, toughly individualized, and yet integral in the ethos and economy of their country.

A famous insurrection took place in the 1890's in the sertão of Bahía, which sheds lurid light on the sertanistas.

Antonio Mendes Maciel was the member of a sertão country family which for a generation had carried on a bloody feud with a sertão family of the village. He was an unremarkable man, until one day his wife eloped with a village constable. Shame drove Maciel from home. For ten years he wandered from ranch to ranch over the vast sertão; doing odd jobs which gradually degenerated into nothing. He grew a beard, wore a loose blue tunic, and became a wandering hermit.

He did not preach or proselytize. Despite himself, his fame grew. The poor asked his advice; and his words, because they were sparse, remote, reluctant, revealed him to the folk a mystic, an ascetic, an enemy of all women, and the announcer of the Second Kingdom. His own name was forgotten. Throughout the sertão he became "the Counsellor": Antonio Conselheiro. He professed to be a Catholic; but when the priests discouraged him, he gently drew the poor to the marketplace and began to preach. His sermons were vague potpourris of superstitious doom, hatred of authority, of women and of joy, mixed with an apocalyptic vision not unlike that of the less literate second-century gnostics.

At last the Archbishop of Bahía took alarm and compounded with the police to arrest him. Submissively Conselheiro gave himself up and heard himself accused in court of having murdered his unfaithful wife. He spoke no word in his defence. Puzzled, the authorities held him for an investigation, which, without the least help from him, proved his innocence. When he stepped out from jail, of course his fame and his following were vastly larger. For years he wandered through the sertão, building churches. When he came to a village the populace for miles around brought wood, stone and mortar; they put up the church; he preached in it once and went his way.

With him now, wherever he went, thousands followed. Old women, *beatas*, fit only for heaven; the half-mad, all the misfits. Also the prostitutes, the killers and the thieves . . . a motley army making disorder perpetual in the sertão. Conselheiro in his blue tunic and long beard, now greying, paid little attention to his multitudes; but he accepted them. His sparse word brought always the same lugubrious tidings: The wicked world nears its end; Prepare for the day of wrath; Seek no joy on earth. Contempt for earth readily masks indulgence before earthly failings. Conselheiro's was a doctrine perfect for the old beyond lust, and for the lustful. Meanwhile, the Empire had dissolved into the Republic.

The new authorities in their fresh zeal decided to suppress the nuisance which had become a disease of the whole sertão. Wherever

Conselheiro's mob went, a church was built; but also cattle were stolen, country stores were rifled, men were found dead in the aatinga, whole villages were disrupted, with the women and their babes abandoning their homes to follow the master. The Governor of Bahia sent a detachment of twenty police to arrest Conselheiro. The ruffians who had made themselves his bodyguard killed half the constables and sent the others scurrying. Conselheiro knew what would come, and led his throngs to the green flank of a hill, leap in the sertão, a spot he had doubtless selected long before in his wandering years, where a sharp formation of the mountains brought rain even in drought. The place was called Canudos.

Soon Canudos was a city. When it fell, years later, the army counted five thousand two hundred houses: wood huts, 'dobe novels, warrenning up and down the valley and the hill, without streets, but with a great square in which Conselheiro at once went to work to build his greatest church. He had added another clause to his pessimistic doctrine: he was against the Republic, whose police had attacked him. "Down with the Republic," became the watchword of thousands of sertanejos: saints, hysterics, whores, gullible mothers, good folk idiotized by their hard life, killers and madmen.

The Bishop of Bahia sent a Capuchin delegation. The master, who was now *Bom Jesus Conselheiro* to the faithful (Good Jesus Counsellor), received the monks gently, without stepping down from the scaffold of his church, where he was working like a common labourer. When the monks harangued him, he let the multitude answer. When the monks angered the faithful, he calmed them. The good bearded men in brown stayed five days in Canudos, christening and marrying hundreds. Then Conselheiro's bodyguard, the bravest killers of the sertão, decided they had stayed long enough, and none too gently rode them out of town.

Canudos lived like the lily of the field—a rather spotted lily. The humble farms and ranches of the neighbourhood were raided for cattle and other food; the bravos, now an "army of defence" against the Republic, descended upon the villages and towns, bearing off important supplies and money. With the money, Conselheiro bought materials for his church.

Crimes like murder and assault were condoned in this holy vale of tears. One day, a vicious fellow was brought before the master for raping a girl of fourteen. Conselheiro said: "She has learned the fate of all women," shrugged his shoulders, and returned to his meditations. But let a man introduce a bottle of *cachaça* into the sacred precincts, let a woman wear an ornament on her breast, let a child miss a holy service; and punishment was swift and cruel.

The disease at last flowered into war. Conselheiro had purchased an allotment of lumber for his church from an important neighbouring town which refused delivery. Word came that the army of Canudos was coming to collect it. The frightened town fathers telegraphed for protection. A hundred soldiers were shipped in by

train. In a week, a remnant of the soldiery in rags limped back to the local capital, Joazeiro.

I do not know how many battles, how many campaigns, how many years the war went on between the tattered sertanejo army of the mad mystic, equipped with blunderbusses and knives, and the federal troops, fully armed, of the Republic. Thousands of soldiers were killed, and thousands of the faithful of Canudos. The city never surrendered. A final artillery bombardment brought silence. The troops went in with their bayonets to the ruins, and found a charnel house. Among the thousands of dead bodies were four living human beings, an old man, two younger men and a child. All the army, all the women, all the thousands who had dwelt in the five thousand two hundred houses, lay dead, either of gun fire or starvation. Conselheiro was found on a mortuary sheet, in his old blue shirt, his hands crossed on his chest, his face in horrible decay, surrounded by faded flowers.

This story of fanatical frenzy* is no less of Brazil than the stubborn and shrewd, peaceful winning of half the continent; than the bloodless freeing of the slaves; than the bloodless independence from Portugal and the easy shift from Empire to Republic. No less of Brazil than the samba; no less than the deep grace and joy of the coast towns, than the rot of Manaus.

The driest of the states is Ceará, where the angry sertão reaches the sea. Its capital is Fortaleza. There has been drought in Ceará and the town is full of sertanejos driven in by thirst and starvation. Fortaleza is a modern city of over a hundred and fifty thousand; its chief commerce and industry is the wax of the carnauba palm, which lives only in dry soil: transplant it to watered loam and it will die. The town is clear and strong. The Negro is minimal, the Indian strain is transfigured into a vigour lacking in the pure Brazilian red man: a vigour whose grace is close to the Negro. The rectangular streets, crowded at nightfall, converge to a pleasant plaza with palms and jambeiros. A cool breeze blows from the sea; and the plaza benches are crowded.

I notice a man in a broad straw hat, a ragged shirt, leather breeches, going from bench to bench, speaking a few words and collecting money. He does not look like a begger, he looks like a sertanejo. At last he comes up to me. He is tall, with lean and straight features. His eyes are firm, his mouth is strong. He says to me:

"My family is here from the sertão. We had to leave, and nothing was alive when we left. I need the fare to take us to Acre.† There's work there in the seringuals."

* The Canudos rebellion is the main theme of Da Cunha's "Os Sertões."

† The journey ahead of this sertanejo, by boat from Fortaleza to Pará and from Pará up the Amazon to Acre, is more than 3,000 miles.

I give him ten milreis, which is more than the average contribution. He takes my hand silently. Then he says:

"I want my Senhora to thank you."

She stands on the opposite side of the plaza, a little woman in a hawl, a babe in her arms, a girl holding her hand. The arc light illumines her worn, homely Indian face. The man speaks with her and the whole family cross the square together. I shake hands with the woman and with the little girl, while the babe sleeps on the mother's shoulder.

The man's dignity, explaining his need in a square full of strangers . . . a square full of brothers: that too is part of the sertão.

THE LUMINOUS LAND

The hard life of the sertão makes the men's bodies ropelike and starves the women of their beauty. Rare in the villages and on the roads is the sight of a comely girl, common as palm trees in most parts of Brazil. Every lovely woman I saw in the sertão was of dark blood or a Negress. This is significant. Woman's beauty is a norm of racial health. No deeper proof could be found that only the African has the energy to resist the sertão, without loss of biological balance.

In Belém, the beauty of the cabocla, so morbidly ephemeral in the Amazon, does not prematurely vanish. But Belém is a privileged city, on the safe margin of the forest. The Indians of the great island of Marajó, across the river from Belém, were the most fortunate, culturally the most advanced, of Brazil's indigenous population. They were in touch with their great brothers northward, the Chibchas; and through the Isthmus of Panama, with the Quechua Empire of the Incas. Moreover, the caboclo of Belém has a strong, suffused African strain.

Go inland from Belém toward towns like Castanhal or Bragança, where the African element is weaker: you find a related, if not identical condition of inward disarray with that of the caboclos we visited beyond Manaus. On the way through the jungle (the road often a sandy path or corduroy over swamps, with fords, not bridges, across the shallower streams) we pass houses, boxlike, empty, with glassless windows. The cement-lined oven is on the outside, and perhaps a primitive mill for grinding manioc meal. The dogs do not run barking after the strange car; the children, too spent by the heat to play, stand and languidly stare.

Our hosts on this journey are the young son of the Governor of Pará and a functionary from the State Ministry of Education. The Governor's son has his father's exquisite courtesy and culture; and small vitality. The other man is a hustler. At every village where we stop, he gathers the storekeeper, the school teacher, the town fathers, about him with hearty talk. And returns to the car with a big bundle of sugar (owing to the depredations of the

German U-boats, Pará has a sugar shortage). The Governor's son is of mixed Indian and white blood. The go-getter is half Negro.

At two schools in the jungle, I study a hundred or more children. Those with a strong African strain are visibly less nervous, more at ease. The best of the teachers is a large, dynamic woman, bursting with joy in her work: a Negress. But when we come to caboclo Castanhal, we find a stifled, static, stagnant city, simmering and without grace. The bazaars and cafés have the forest-like crowding; the men and women have no leap in them, and no search.

Go down the coast toward the great sugar states; watch the flesh of the towns become firm and the rhythm rise, as the Negro element increases. There is no doubt: the tropic forest calls for a race with the forest gnuis.

Twelve hundred miles down from Belém is the state of Pernambuco and the cities, Olinda and Recife. (We are still in north Brazil.) Olinda, the older settlement, is referred to by the boatmen as "the city," a *cidade*. It is a lovely town, full of Portuguese grace and a gracious people. The Dutch captured it and lost it. Recife, a few miles down the coast, swelled into the third largest city of Brazil. Olinda matured its subtle brew of Portugal and Africa, and then rested.

Above the public square with its tall palms and flamboyants are the ruins of a church, the scarred, two-towered façade with masculine scrollwork, and nothing behind but a hill. São Antonio and the Benedictine Monastery of São Bento are a little florid, with a quality not unlike the Byzantine. (The church has some fine Dutch tiles from the years of occupation.)

A charming little German monk took us around São Bento; he teaches philosophy to the Seminary students. He reminded me of what Reinhold Niebuhr once told me: "The Germans are delightful, individually; and dreadful collectively." Yes: he knew the pragmatism of John Dewey; it was part of his course. The library was a large, huge-windowed room, with late seventeenth-century panels. But no painting could compete with the glory of those open windows: east and south the sea, a sunlit sapphire, and Recife a white foam of breakers; west, the hills fumed with palms; and from it all, the day . . . murmur of man and beast and vegetation . . . caressing the silence of the stacked books on the shelves. Vinicius picked a volume from the shelf, a book by his great-grandfather. The German monk, as an astronomer might describe a sun spot, kept talking of John Dewey.

Recife (which means reef) is built on reefs and islands. Just before you come to it from Olinda you pass one of the several *mucambos* in which dwell nearly half the city's five hundred and fifty thousand.

The houses fill the swamp and bottom land, in and about town. They are built of mud and 'dobe, latticed in thin poles and bamboo;

metimes of wood, tin or plaster; with thatched roofs. Like the african clan-house, they are long and divided into many rooms by partitions that do not reach the roof. There is no ceiling. The floor, like the yard, is earth: hunting ground for the chickens, the dogs, the children.

The miserable mucambo is unfit for human habitation; infant mortality is high, disease spreads like fire; yet the folk are at ease and luminous. Despite the dissolvent city all around, the mucambo gives the sense of a sure and quiet group, as if this were indeed a village in the forest.

The same communal spirit is in the crowded streets of the old town; which is built on islands, with a church . . . São Jose, São Antonio . . . for each district. The street wind; some so narrow a man can touch both mouldering walls with his hands. The windows and doors are always open; the folk, dark as their gutters, do not dodge the sun, live out of doors, with and within each other, as in a village. There is always music: the *batata* vendor sings his wares, balancing his two wide baskets just above the ground from the bow on his shoulders; the boy strikes his triangles to sell his syrupy drinks; the whole street is sibilant with the soft purr of the Brazilian Portuguese, so strangely like Russian.

I think of the typical village of the Mata: the oxcarts creeping along on solid wood wheels, the children in the mud, the women washing and scrubbing their men's shirts at the stream which halves the town, steep from the two banks; and the men at checkers in the café, within the perennial music of the samba. A sweet communal whole is the village. Brazil's real unit? Take the individual man or woman; you find the same integer, the same direct rootedness and easefulness in earth—yet complex like the samba. It is a forest essence as of trees, each whole and of their individual wholeness making the thick wood. You may find it anywhere. But its archetype in Brazil is the transplanted Negro.

Here it is in the mucambos; here it is in the old streets of Recife. Enter one of the churches, whose soft façade does not interfere, and with the glaring interior you lose it. Cross the bridges over the rivers into modern Recife, and you lose it.

As the class rises, the colour thins; the village consistency goes. There is confusion; there is Voelker-chaos. Integration requires strength. Recife, the great commercial city founded by merchants—Portuguese, Jews, Dutch—become a sprawl of warehouses, villas, pretty bridges over blue canals, interminable bourgeois streets, a few model workers' districts . . . and slums and mucambos. As a whole, Recife is an ugly, dissolute, unintegrated city. Only the poorest districts where the forest strain is strong, have the energy for wholeness.

Here in the malarial outlands or the overripe old town where toil is most harsh, where proper food and the decent care of the children is a legend, like the cool sea breezes that blow only for the

rich: here, despite all these unforgivable handicaps, and here alone, lives a folk with the energy to be whole.

Do not idealize their state, disgraceful to Brazil's proud "Aryan" ruling class. The mucambos and slums mean infant deaths, syphilis, malaria, leprosy, ignorance, crime. Despite them, the forest race brings beauty. How it would bloom in a free world!

Four hundred miles down the coast from Pernambuco, is the city of Bahia.* The rim of it, called *Reconcavo*, is valleys of palm and jungle, hills tumultuously green, and the huts of the black children of the sugar slaves. Not till the outskirts of the city does the colour lighten.

The town is terraced from the depth of the Bay on a sudden steep hill, beyond which vales and other hills wave in all directions. Even the flank of the first hill is warren'd with criss-cross alleys. Its summit has the business streets; modern buildings and terraces, some with open air cafés, overlooking the lower city. On this high ground live the people who can pay for the cool southeast trade winds: avenues of villas, gaily tinted, the trivial but unobjectionable finery of the middle classes. Most are homes of light-skinned families; men of business and the professions are likely to be light mulattoes or *brancos de Bahia*, whites with only a touch of colour. But the black man, who has got himself an education and made money, lives in the same streets, in the same kind of house, a frequent and unprotested neighbour.

At the centre of the lower town are the harbour and *mercado*. Rough-hewn sailboats at anchor (*catraias* or *saveiros*): their wood-alive, rhythmic hulls seem hand-carved; their masts seem live trees, and their tawny sails gems in the sun. In and out they ride, heavy with cargo. Two stem-tugs seem interlopers. Not the long canoes, dug out of trees, paddled by dark youths. The lovely boats have lovely names: *Nova Arimedaiva* (*alva* is morning star), *Estrela Feliz*, *Luz do Mar*, *Azilado Fora* (exiled from home). The folk in the *mercado* are dark, quiet and erect like trees. Fertile and pungent like the goods in their hands: a hundred fruits, *cariman* (manioc cakes, very white), *mingau* (a thick yellow manioc drink). The men are strong and relaxed in their knee-drawers and broad straw hats; the women, deep-breasted always, are a little more tense. Come close to them, the women and the men; you will hear them singing or humming, while they work, their intricate, deep music.

It begins to rain, and we take refuge in the nearby church (Bahia has a church for every day of the year). This one has two square turrets not flush with the façade but at a contrapuntal angle. On the church curb, untroubled by the rain, stands a blind, nearly naked singer with a primitive guitar; and a dark boy, beautiful as an angel, to guide him and collect the pennies. The gaunt, bloodless singer in rags that were once white looks like an Aleijadinho

* Its real name is Salvador or São Salvador. Bahia is the name of the state.

prophet. He sings *chorinhos*, caboclo songs with larger weaves of Indian than of African in the Portuguese patterns. It is a music fluid, swift, soft, unstressed, sorrowful. There is Indian in it: the submissive sadness; and Arab: the lithe movement. Its form has the nervous tension of the Portuguese *fados*.

Beyond the church begins the Ladeira da Conceição, a diagonal street that rises like a bow, girding the steep hill. On the side toward the upper town, there is a viaduct; and within its arches, houses have been cunningly inserted. (Above them in the bare rock of the hill, and then the upper city.) On the seaward side are tall tenements. Colour. Women on balconies call down or across to one another, in a kind of silence. This row of houses has gaps; through them, the sea; the saveiros embosomed in the breeze, taking the sea. Toward its end, the Ladeira turns sharply and reaches the square of the modern upper town, called Praça Castro Alves, after Brazil's famous abolitionist poet.

But first another street meets the Ladeira, the rua do Sodre; turning down again, yet not wholly: breasting the long escarpment. This is a street of the folk (in one of its houses, Castro Alves died). Men with huge wicker baskets on their heads sing their wares; women at their wash before the public fountain, also singing. Lateral streets narrow as corridors, go down steep steps of stone to the lower city; and up, past tiers of houses to the height of the hill: more luminous and open than the Kasbah of Algiers, fresher and less poor than Lisbon. At last the street finds its way to another square; the Praça do Duque de Caixas: ornate fountain, two churches, fruit and flower market.

Here is the air of Bahía; open and plastic. What is its secret? Not the architecture: gracious heritage of a colonial past. Not the mild, moist sky; and not alone the people. A subtle fusion of the dark folk with the stone- and thought-world inherited from the men who were once their masters. In Bahía the Negro is free. And the women's breasts are free. And the grass is free, pushing up through the paved streets.

Two very dark girls ask money for Masses to the two Negro saints: Cosme and Damião. I have nothing less than ten milreis. The girl puts out her hand and her white teeth gleam. She says she will give me change. I let her have the bill. She runs away with it, laughing at the trick which has won money for her saints.

The business city is a brief street of dignified, modern buildings from the Praça Castro Alves to two connected squares that are among the loveliest in the world: the Praça 15 de Novembro and the Praça Anchieta. Think of the purest square of Florence; give it a verdant, dark warmth deeper than Tuscany, close to the pre-Roman Etruscan; subdued, not by will or ratiocination, as Rome subdues Latium: but by its attainment of its own nuclear heart, in which is peace. Here is the Cathedral; the great church and convent of São Francisco. This order is architecturally Portugal;

and Portugal transcended, as if that thin west edge of the small Peninsula of Iberia were hugely pregnant with a depth called Africa and Brazil.

The twin squares are the threshold to the old upper town. Churches flowering yet reserved; ancient streets with balconies of hand-wrought iron, sudden vistas of sea and green flaming hills. The churches are careful with pyramid towers, carved pediments (here fantasy), and a discreet baroque far soberer than Portugal's *estilo manuelino*. The very curve of the streets has meaning unguessed in our America and Europe.

On the Praça Pelourinho, stood a pillory for slaves. The square is paved in rough cobbles. From it and into it, lead streets in all directions, and at every level, crowded and fertile with houses of every colour, tiny warm shops and stalls. They are bastioned by churches; and on the horizons, church towers with blue tile mirror the heavens upon the swaying city. In the humblest streets, sudden mansions that have lost their wealth, not their nobility. Like the wholly tiled "house of the seven murders": the corridors and patio all blue *azulejos*, the well (where a slavey draws water) a miracle of graceful iron; and every room, now crowded with the poor, has iron grilles and slender doors. From a balcony we look down and far out over the sea. Within the counterpoint of streets, churches, tiered and terraced houses, voices, grass in the paving stones, mules with huge wicker side baskets, there is immobility and silence. It is the Forest . . . it is the Negro.

The town is ninety per cent coloured. There are few pure whites, few pure Africans, no pure Indians. And this "mongrel" city, as the Aryanists would call it, has a clarity, a grace, an integrity, whose equal I have never seen, unless it was in some of the old towns of Spain. This wholeness of Bahía is less dynamic, less explosive. A persevering world. A forest grove.

We drive to a suburb. In all directions, under the hills and on their breasts, dwell the folk. Here live the sumptuous *bahianas*, whom you see in the central streets, carrying great baskets on their heads, and in the rhythm of their bodies a deep peace that is wisdom. They are dark women, in their *vestimenta bahiana*: a full skirt or *saia* of many colours, ballooned by a starched white underskirt; a long white blouse trimmed with lace and short sleeves so loose that one of them bares the brown shoulder; the bound turban ready for the load; open sandals or naked feet; and the profusion of necklaces and bracelets making a brave music, as they pass, of corals, turquoise, ivory fetishes, silver and sea shells. They are women whose slow, substantial gait seems to have the tempo, the strength, the sure destiny of Brazil within it.

We walk down an alley of 'dobe houses; beyond a ravine, the open country moves into a dance of hills and valleys. We enter a house where the folk have turned a room into a toy stage. Between

potted plants and two side windows, chairs have been placed in a semicircle. The family sit on the sills, we are seated on a porch looking in. A small group of young men take the chairs: the musicians of the *batucada*.

They are all dark, *pardos* or *pretos*. They all sing. Two play the *cuica*, a large and a small one: a hollow, barrel-shaped wood instrument open at one end, and in the other a metal prong which the man rubs with a wet cloth. Three play *tamborins*, different-sized drums; one a *pandeiro*, which we call tambourine. One plays the *agôgô*: two joined metal bells shaped like cowbells and sounding, when struck by a knife or iron rod, an augmented third. And one plays the *aguê*, the calabash which the Portuguese call *piano de cuia*. They sing sambas and batucadas. The usually banal words do not exist in the music.*

Here are typical lines:

*I have the batucada to make me happy,
You left me but that does not worry me.*

Or:

*If you want to go you may,
But later you will cry.*

Sometimes the samba will use a local event as pretext, like the famous *Praça Onze*, which sings the end of the famous carioca square to be merged into the new Avenida Presidente Vargas; or the love object will be, not a woman but a city, such as the famous *Você já foi a Bahia*.

The music is always in eight-eighths time, with an outer enveloping rhythm and inner contrapuntal rhythms. The outer rhythm is monotonous, repetitious, languorous, sad, defeatist. The vitality comes from the inner rhythms and their subtle variations, which are usually expressed not in thirds or sixths, but in fractions of sixteenths or thirty-seconds. There is no manifest aspiration, as in our spirituals,

* There are exceptions. The words, for instance, of *O que é que a bahiana tem?* (What is it that the Bahiana has?) are poetry of high, subtle quality:

O que é que a bahiana tem?

Tem torço de sera, tem
Tem brinco de ouro, tem
Corrente de ouro, tem
Tem panno da Costa, tem
Tem bata rendada, tem—ah!
Pulseira de ouro, tem
Tem saia emgomada, tem
Sandalia enfeitada, tem

Tem graça como ninguém. . . .
Como ella requebra bem. . . .

Even the reader with no Portuguese will understand the extraordinary *tom-tom* onomatopoeia created by the repetition of the *tem-tem*, which means *has-has*.

whose simple body of song rises in a single flame; nor is there violent deformation, as in our jazz, grotesque and contortionist dance music. In samba or samba batida, the flame flows like blood in a sound body. Sometimes a plaint will leap, always subsiding. The major form is horizontal and down-tending, but the organic substance making the form, the organs and blood, are nervous and affirmative. The final effect is of a sadness made lovely by the vertical strength which is the energy of the sadness. The recitative element in Brazilian folk music, long and subtly inflected, is a perpetual banking of inner fires that are never quenched, but never leaping. This is the essence of the untranslatable *saudade*; longing, defeat, perseverance.

We leave town to dine at a large orange plantation. It is hard, although they are all around me, to see the workers or their homes in the dark. The murmur of voices, the movement of bodies soft and mellow, gives the sense, as I walk the dusty road between the houses, that I am in the thick of a forest. We enter a home; its close air of dark wood, pungent food and self-effacing bodies, deepens the forest impression.

A bahiana proudly sets the table with bahiana dishes. It is food subtly condimented and fused into a constant savour that might appear monotonous to undelicate palates. I remember a paste of shrimps, *vatapá*; doughnuts of beans and oil from the African *dendê* palm, *acarajé*; a dish of mashed okra and other elements, including manioc farina, *carurú*; a rice dish, *arroz de côco*; *adúm*, a cake made of maize, onions, shrimps and *fubá*.

While we eat, the workers gather outside our kitchen and sing for us and dance. The one instrument is the *berimbau*, a bow strung with a wire; at the lower end a gourd cut in half, and the open mouth of it held against the naked belly of the player who strikes the wire with a metal thong, the gourd giving body resonance (vegetal and flesh) to the subtle rhythms of the wire. There are two *berimbaus*, each with two distinct whole notes whose intervals seem to admit an almost infinite gamut. The dance, by the men only, is a stylized fight. The two men squat, twist, perform handsprings, clasp and writhe free . . . all to the music. They keep low to the ground in a plastic wrestling, earth-seeking, earth-involved, earth-contained. No aspiration. The folk is within its culture, like trees. Self-sufficient, communal, like trees.

Through the murmurous, moist dark, by the light of a lantern, the host leads me to a devil. He is made of plaster, hideous, and squats in an altar bowered with shrubs. I see the offerings at his feet: an orange, a cigar, the half-carass of a fowl. The sacrificial knife which killed it is in the hand of the devil. The host speaks lightly of his superstitious people; and in his laugh a faint tremor. We leave the devil to his dark.

Part of our callousness toward the Negro is the prevalent assumption that all African culture was on the same low level. Apart from

North Africa, including Egypt, which, however, should not be too sharply separated from the Negro world, there were roughly seven culture areas. The least evolved were in the south and southeast: the largely pastoral Hottentot and Boschimana. The Congo, which includes Angola, the Sudan and the East Horn, had veritable nations with techniques and religions admirably adapted to a pre-scientific life in the hot forest, and far more evolved than the techniques and religions of the Brazilian red man. Tribes like the Ashanti, Fulah, Mina, Haussé, Malé, were in close touch with the Arab and Egyptian world. Among them were Moslems, versed in Sufi mysticism; among them were some of the tallest and physically most superb of men; among them were women of great beauty. Another instance of the complacent falsity of the idea that the conqueror is always superior to the conquered.

The majority of the slaves came to Brazil from these northern nations. Certain authorities believe that Brazil got a better choice than the English colonies of North America; and Gilberto Freyre points out that this was far from accidental. Our colonies admitted only one motive: manpower on the plantations. The early Portuguese avowedly sought, along with workers, stewards who could write and figure, and women for their homes and their beds. But whatever the comparative quality of the original stocks which came to the Portuguese and English, the life in Brazil deepened the distinction. The Negroes, as we have seen, were maltreated and exploited; but they were *admitted*; deeply they were loved by the very class which held them in economic subjection. Brazilian society in the racial sense was Christian: its way of life tacitly assumed that all men are brothers. White poor men too, and red, were abused and exploited. The Negro was the labouring class. The Negro also was the soil for free emotional expression.

According to Freyre, the soundest and the deepest of Brazil's social critics, the lovely Mina women by the eighteenth century dominated the personal life of the great states, Bahia, Pernambuco and Minas Geraes. They set the standards of the home, sometimes as slaves, sometimes as concubines, more and more frequently as wives. They brought up the young masters. They were frequently the mothers of the illegitimate sons of priests: sons whose pre-eminence became proverbial, as the saying shows: "priests' sons always have good lives." The women shaped the tastes in art, music and legend, of the dawning Brazilian people. Probably their matriarchal democracy of emotion accentuated the indifference of the folk to political and economic values.

Brazil gradually became a racial democracy. Almost against the profession of their minds, and generations before slavery was abolished, the people ceased to look on colour as an intrinsic mark of rank. The dark were the humble: the drawers of water, the hewers of wood, the servants; by and large, so they remain. Since colour generalized the lower economic classes, colour counted indirectly;

there was colour prejudice indirectly. But the process by which this class distinction becomes caste was never followed in Brazil.

In India, the conquering race insured its economic dominance by drawing irretractible parallel lines between race and occupation. In the United States, the lines are even sharper and more terrible than caste; the whites literally segregate the economically inferior race into an inferior nation. The Negro in our country may rise in economic status; he may become a millionaire merchant, a successful lawyer or musician, but he is always the Negro; his advance is always within the Negro pale. Brazil has few rich Negroes; the whole economic level is far lower; yet the Negro advances not as a Negro but as a Brazilian. His promotion in economic and intellectual power at once lifts him into the social class of his new status. If he is a good physician, charging high fees, his patients will be largely of the white and light-skinned groups, since these have the most money; his wife will probably be of the same group to which belong the majority of the intellectuals whom his tastes attract.

The consequences of this interfusion in Brazil are immense. There is real integration; there is constant eugenic selection by standards of spiritual, intellectual and emotional values, rather than colour. These values in all the racial groups immediately flow into the life blood of the entire nation. Every ethnic part freely partakes of and nourishes the whole. The immediate visible result is a relaxed and flowing people, probably the least neurotic in the world. The future effects, in national life, are incalculably potent.

Racial democracy, in which Brazil is a world leader, must be at the roots of a true social and economic order. It must be at the roots of a democratic culture. Its absence is the immediate cause of the rachitic culture of our own South. Racial democracy in a country of many bloods is circulation of the blood. Little gain for the specific organs and senses of a body to co-ordinate, if this primary life-flow is blocked. The development of the higher centres in such an impeded organism will result in deformative pressures, and in degeneration. Signs of this pathology are already dangerously common in the United States.

In other words, the slow, crude, seemingly blind growth of Brazil has been healthy. This does not mean it has advanced as far as it should.

In political, economic, and intellectual life, Brazil is undeveloped, because it has not yet been forced to apply its democratic intuition into these fields. It tolerates living levels (as in the Mucambos of Recife) which are obscene in a rich land. A chart of the share in Brazil's wealth enjoyed by the masses shows it to be an immense inverted pyramid, with all the instability of such a structure. Brazil lacks, has always lacked, interest or competence in government by the people; and has thrived best, like a social infant, under benevolent paternalism. With far too little worry, it has permitted

the present government to destroy the century-old autonomy of its states and to deprive it of freedom of the press. Indeed, in all the techniques of practical communication, from roads to literacy and intellectual inquiry, Brazil is a backward country. This indolence of Brazil is a poignant danger in our epoch, when reaction leads so many armies (on both sides of the struggle) and finds so many treacherous spies to introduce into the body and thought of the modern world. The culture of a racially democratic country must be democratic; and in Brazil this harmony is threatened.

For instance, in all the states except Bahia, the African religious rites, known as *macumba* in Rio, *candomblé* in Bahia, *catimbó* in Pernambuco, are legally banned. A good deal of sensational nonsense has been written about these ceremonies, much of it by Brazilians who, unconsciously, by this means convince themselves of their Aryan superiority. A good deal of competent literal description has been written by American sociologists. There is no doubt that a corrupt *macumba* exists in Rio for the tourist trade; and this has been the pretext for the police ban. There is also a good deal of corrupt *samba*, which is no reason to suppress the real. If, in our own country, corrupt art and religion were to inspire similar police ordinances, the radio, Hollywood and most of the churches would vanish. The resistance to these rites in Brazil points to a dangerous "Aryanizing" tendency in the country.

The *candomblé* is a syncretism of African and Christian intuitions. It expresses a deeply organic life-awareness and is therefore nourishment to the æsthetic and intellectual growth of immature Brazil. As that growth continues, the rudimentary forms which have fed it will fall away. This, by a process of assimilation, not of prohibition.

The *orixás* or "saints," manifested in the *candomblé*, are animistic and pantheistic gods. They represent elements and traits of nature: lightning (*Xangô*), fresh water (*Oxun*) rain (*Anamburucá*), wind and storm (*Yanson*), war and iron (*Ogun*), etc. The god possesses "the son and daughter" who must be "made": that is, trained through a long tutelage to be worthy of the sacred burden. The possession is induced, magically, by rites, dance and music, at the ceremonial meetings. The possessed dance and sing for hours; the priest or priestess (*pai* or *mãe de santo*) strictly regulates the rites; and the faithful vicariously partake of the ecstasy before them.

The relation of this to the revivalist testimonies of our own evangelical sects, white as well as Negro, and to the possession of saints and mystics in all ages, is manifest. The distinctive trait of the *candomblé* is that the god or spirit manifested in the "son" or "daughter" is only a humble earth-force, a terrestrial life-force. Since the kind of emotion expressed in our own revivalist hysterics is undoubtedly, in most cases, all-too-human: a repressed sexuality falsely received as a vision or message of God, the Brazilian rite which makes no pretence at transcendentalism and is pantheistic and naturalistic, has the advantage of soundness; whence, doubtless,

the æsthetic superiority of its dance forms and music over the shouting and rolling of our revivalists. The *candomblé* is in process of absorption. The Catholic church encourages the linking of the *orixás* with specific saints, and of fetish ceremonies with church festivals.

The prudery and insincerity of the official ban outside Bahia is part of that dangerous trend in Brazilian cultural life which Freyre has called "Aryan mysticism." In the nineteenth century the intellectuals of Brazil reacted, much like the Russians later, against their own overdeveloped emotional nature, by becoming positivists and rationalists. Since the Negro in them was the mystic, the poet and the earth, they turned against the Negro. Machado de Assis, himself a mulatto and the leading novelist of nineteenth-century Brazil, produced an acerb intellectualized art which glorified this trend. Da Cunha wrote Brazil's greatest book, *Os Sertões*, on the premise of Brazilian race inferiority. A leader today is the famous sociologist, Oliveira Vianna, whose premise is that the Africans are an inferior race and that Brazil's hope lies in their gradual absorption and disappearance. The calibre of Vianna's logic may be seen in his proof that the Negro is a racial inferior because his death rate is higher. That this vital inferiority is economic, the result of the misery and ignorance of the poor, does not occur to Dr. Vianna.

Plenty of stout warriors carry the battle against the Viannas; led by Freyre, the novelist Lins do Rego, Portinari and other artists and writers.

Intuition is a deep but treacherous guide. Its voice, which in purity is man's organic wholeness speaking within cosmic wholeness, is simulated too easily and often by the voices of passion, of egoism, and of shrill fragmentary logics. Brazil, like all great pregnancies, is in constant danger. Her virtues have their obverse vices. Indolence gullibility, arrogance, reflex-action, are the "nether side" of intuition. Brazil thus far, in a less dangerous world, has lived by faith and belief. She will be safe only when she reaches organic, conscious knowledge.

In a bar in Bahia I see a sign :

"The word of the Brazilian government is the word of Brazil. All of us must fulfill it. Any attitude or expression in discord with it is a crime against the fatherland."

If the living body of Bahia were not impervious to such language, these words would make it shudder. And it would tear them down from every bar, from every servile newspaper.

It is midnight. We are on the breast of a hill behind Bahia. The night caressing us is a warm, moist body, sensitive as a woman. Below us a stream ripples in silver through a thicket of bananas and bamboos, beside the corral of a small farm: we hear the animals breathing. Above us on the hill's crest, palms reach their starry

fingers into the stars; and beyond the hill we hear the chant monotonous and orgasmic, of the *candomblé*. Across the valley, dark within starlight, lies Bahía.

It is a sacred city. For it has proved, by living, the grace of the brotherhood of man; and this is worship. It has proved the genius of the African to create his share in what all men love, his deep collaboration with another race to serve what all men love, if only that race have tenderness and be willing. The great houses of Bahía are Portugal; the roots of the dark folk who live in them are Africa. The living city is Man. Therefore Bahía is sacred. For this deep dignity, this grace, are revelation.

THE MIND AND THE WILL (RIO DE JANEIRO)

We all remember the farmer's wife who, on her first visit to a zoo, gazed for a long time at the hippopotamus, then exclaimed: "There ain't no such animal." A like impotence to accept the report of my eyes always overcomes me when I see Rio. The city's natural beauty is not to be believed; it approximates some absolute, and thereby estranges the intelligence, which demands not absolutes but particulars; not unimaginables but concretions.

In this town, whose loveliness and joyousness throw a sinister veil over its social diseases; in the Guanabara Palace, whose grotesque, futile rhetoric of splendour is a symptom of these diseases, sits the President of Brazil, Getúlio Vargas.

Vargas is a little man, inclined to plumpness which has increased since his motor accident on May Day. His activity is all cerebral. It is said that he forces himself to play periodic games of golf, and that he plays badly. This proves that he finds pushing the white little ball a bore; if he liked it, he would be the best golfer in Brazil. Vargas has the small, square hands, hairy and hard, of a worker. His head sits on his shoulders like a precocious student's: there is the discrepancy between it and his oldish body which reveals excess development of mind over emotion. The head is harmoniously shaped; the eyes have cunning and humour; both head and eyes give him the air of youth. Vargas has lived hard, but saved emotion. Cool people remain young; as only the passionate who have wisdom. Vargas in the Biblical sense is not a wise man; but he is shrewder than the Prophets.

At first blush, this politician who has ruled Brazil since 1930 appears to be the least Brazilian of Brazilians. There is a paradox here which, like all paradox, is a complex truth. Vargas is a marginal man in Brazil. He comes from the southern frontier with Argentina, and speaks excellent Spanish. He is as cool as a glacier, and nearly as slow. He is known to be fearless; but one asks if his courage at least in part is not due to a glandular set-up delaying and diminishing fear's visceral reactions. In part, certainly, it is due to his deliberate and controlling strength of reason, which

doubtless taught him years ago that fear gets one nowhere and that courage pays. Fortune is the whore whom only courage buys.

This coolness, this deliberate reasonableness, is an old story in Brazil. We have seen it in the rise of the Masons and positivists (like the *científicos* of Mexico under Porfirio Diaz); in the "Aryan" cult of white superiority, which assumes that the European values of intellectual will are absolute; in the astringent literature of a novelist like Machado de Assis (himself a mulatto). These are all subterfuges of escape. Brazil is immense, intricate, passionate. It is tempting to "understand" it, by simplifying its huge challenge: which means, to lop off a good half of its uncharted elements; to carve oneself, from the enormous realm of its potentialities, a snug little province . . . a limit; and then to ease one's ego by asserting that this is all there is. The positivist has comfortably card-catalogued reality; and what can't be catalogued is "nonsense." The empirical rationalist gets rid of the life that bulges away from his tight pattern, by denying its existence. The pro-Aryan mulatto, at a loss before the Forest in his soul, cultivates the artificial garden inherited from one strain of his forefathers. The most astringent "Europeans" I have known are certain Jews and Negroes.

Therefore, if Vargas is the least Brazilian of Brazilians, this too is Brazilian. Brazil is the land, not only of Aleijadinho, the can-doblé and the samba; Brazil is also, as we have seen, the land of the priests who wanted Aleijadinho's "blasphemous" sculptures removed from the churches; of the police ban of the *macumba*, and of smart young ladies in Belém singing "The Bonnie Braes of Loch Lomond."

This proneness to the falsely simple answer to life's problems: the denying most of life's dimensions, is a dominant disease—I am tempted to say, *the* dominant disease of our time. I have analysed it at length elsewhere. Here let me merely note that the popular modern rise of the dictator is a symptom of the same false simplification. The dictator "simplifies" government, the citizen's responsibility in all economic-social problems, and his vexed problems of loyalty. He lifts decision from the people; substitutes his word for the confused processes of trial and error. Fascism, nazism, dialectical materialism as a philosophy of life interpreted at each moment by a Communist Party secretary, are all symptoms of our disease: false simplification.

Thus the paradox of Vargas begins to take on the shape of a comprehensive truth. Brazil stood on the brink of civil war. Her international economy was based on coffee; and with the world collapse of 1929, her finances went to pieces. The states lurched again into their old separatist trends. There was no Dom Pedro to told them together. Bourgeois democrats, fascists (called *integrabilistas*), communists, were fragments; each unable to unify the country and hold it against foreign pressure. The negativeness of

Vargas became a positive value; the limitations of Vargas became an integrating function.

I believe Vargas can justly claim that he held Brazil together by playing the middle against all the ends; by playing coolness against all the fires; by playing centripetal delay against all the tangential dynamisms of the country. He kept the states together by removing the organs of their separatism. Brazil began to build roads. Brazil increased her schools. Brazil suppressed her communists, fascists; also, virtually, the labour unions. Brazil made herself the continent's leader by taking the lead in war collaboration with the United States. All this, not through the President's conscious imagination. I doubt that Vargas is an imaginative man in the sense of knowing, loving, fostering the genius of Brazil. His gift has had one facet: to absorb the country's contradictions at a moment in her history when they might have overwhelmed her; as they have overwhelmed Argentina. The equilibrium which his political action has induced *releases* the normative energies of Brazil; and it is these, despite the conscious will of Vargas, that move forward.

The equilibrium is temporary, and is dangerous. Vargas is justified only as a timely neutralizing force in the confused career of an immensely complex but politically, economically, backward country.

It is significant that Vargas does not trust the people. Brazil's press has never been good, but it used to be free; today it is servile and rigidly controlled. The democratic process had at least the formal respect of Brazil's rulers; today it is openly flouted. But Vargas *senses* the people, and obeys what he senses. When the German U-boats sank four Brazilian coastwise vessels in August, 1942, there were riots in the cities. Only Aranha, the Chancellor, wanted war. The army and the war ministers were against fighting the nazi. Vargas, as usual, sat in the middle and delayed. But after a week, there was no doubting the voice of the people. They had no press; so they plastered the public buildings of all the capital towns with crude manifestos and cartoons. Vargas read the writings on the wall, and reluctantly declared war.

His action has two contrapuntal themes, which he keeps going with fuguelike deftness. The first is his preventing the people from the fulfilment of their deeper wishes. His "justification" for this is that the people are confused and backward. On the day that they crystallize their social will, Vargas is doomed. The second theme is his sensing of their immediate wish, just before it can reach the surface of expression; the capturing it, the turning it into his own action. Let me explain. The immediate wish of the Brazilians was unity; the various parties which expressed fragments of their deeper needs could not achieve this unity; Vargas suppressed the parties, and gave unity to Brazil. That is an instance of what I call the second theme of his music; as is also Brazil's declaration of war on the hated Nazis. But the people's deepest wish is for social

justice, for the abolition of poverty and exploitation, so that they may indeed sing in their sun. Vargas knows he can never be the instrument of this fulfilment. Hence his suppression of free speech and the free press; his suppression of free elections, his shrewd destruction, as they arise, of all potential rivals. This is what I call the "first theme" of his music.

From all of which it should be plain that Brazil is not a fascist country. Brazil is no hysterical or feeble or pathological land which has "unified" itself under a delusion of grandeur, under the lie of force as a "nation in arms," a "nation on the march" with a demigod Fuehrer. Vargas, despite his past tenderness for Mussolini, is not a fascist leader. He is much closer to the classic South American dictator; the product of a politically and economically backward country which has given up none of its ideals of democracy. Brazil is still too deep in the arcana of race creation, in the forging of her race democracy, to have come up to the surfaces of political democratic action. The shallowness of Vargas is no small part of his strength. He is a technician, not a poet; and he emerged at a moment when the slow, organic growth of Brazil needed a technical—one might say a *surgical*—operation.

Let us not forget that Mexico's revolution did not put forth a *creative* political leader, Lázaro Cárdenas, until long after Díaz, Obregon and Calles.

On my return to Rio, I found General Agustín Justo, former President of Argentina and the leader of the pro-Ally, anti-Castillo wing of the Conservative Party. Brazil had recently declared war on Germany. Justo on some earlier occasion had been named honorary general of the Brazilian army. He flew to Rio to "offer his services against the continental enemy." It was a gesture, of course; and Rio replied with a gesture magnificent as her harbour. The carioca capital threw her gayest shawl over her lovely shoulders and adorned her deep breast with all her jewels—to welcome the foxy old General as if he were her favourite lover. Of course, the entire celebration was staged by Chancellor Aranha who was so busy, those days, that I could scarcely see him.

Justo said to me: "There are two kinds of friend; the pleasant friend, and the useful friend. You have been . . . to my country and the continent . . . the useful friend."

We spoke . . . between receptions, speeches, parades in his honour . . . of our beloved Argentina. I expressed my concern, again, for her spiritual and moral leadership. We spoke of the dangerous element of time.

I said: "If Argentina's government waits to get out of the Nazi camp . . . or, let's say, to get off the fence, until after it has become plain that the Allies are going to win, she will have lost prestige for a generation: a vital generation."

Justo agreed. It was plain, although of course not said, that

he would not be averse from running for President in the next election.

"That may be too late," I suggested. Justo suggested much, and said nothing.

Justo-Vargas-Aranha (with two armies and navies full of Darland and Pétains in the background): one could feel, in that cool Rio spring, in the coming together of these cool and capable men . . . under the fanfare . . . a conjunction of forces.* Would it include, would it at least admit, the human wealth of this great new world? Might it not be a design of iron that the folk one day must capture, like the design of the Brazil-Bolivia and the Argentina-Bolivia railroads into the oil of the Chaco?

I think of the diffuseness of the Argentines; of the foetal quality of Brazil's folk. I suffer. But it is the destiny of man that his birth should be in blood and within the shadow of death.

Vargas' selection of Oswaldo Aranha for Chancellor and Foreign Minister is more evidence of his political genius. It would be hard, even in Brazil, to find two more different figures; and yet Aranha also hails from Rio Grande do Sul, the small state of Vargas, who is his old political comrade.

By all the romantic rules, Aranha is the genius. He is a tall, handsome fellow (under fifty), with flaring grey hair and quick eyes. Within the brilliant volubility of his speech are intuitive perceptions that disarm you. He is a gay man, a lover of high living, of horses and, I suspect (like all Brazilians), of women. He gives the impression of a well-ordered madness: of a mad energy on a rail. What is the rail? Ambition? *Joie de vivre*? These are traits of the man; but the rail is *intuition*. The key of Vargas' fugue, and of Aranha's madcap gusto, is *intuition*. Both men, in the way of wielders of political power, may be rascals; but they are close to this moment of Brazil; and Brazil has used them. (This, by the way, is a lead to the meaning of intuition. Intuition is organic knowledge: organic in the person, and therefore, since the person is integral of the cosmos, cosmic knowledge. Intuition is the world, is life, *knowing* through the instrument of the person.)

When I sense madness in Aranha, I am aware that madness is pathological. Both Vargas and Aranha are healthy individuals. Neither Vargas nor Aranha, *qua* political functions, is healthy. They are forces and means of a nation's adolescence in a socially sick era; and adolescence, although normal, is morbid. Aranha, Brazil's Foreign Minister, is a fisher in troubled waters. He is at home in these waters: imperialism, British and American; fascism, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian. He is not entirely outside them. He is the "man of the left" of Vargas, to offset the barracks-men and

* Justo died suddenly, January 10, 1943. I do not alter the text, because he was a symbol. Perhaps the disappearance from the scene of Argentina of conservatives like him and Ortíz is also a symbol.

reactionaries of the Cabinet whom we met on that May Day celebration when Vargas failed to turn up. All these men are in the Cabinet because Vargas needs them; and because different parts of Vargas likes them. (Recall the first theme of his "music"; the repressive.)

Aranha is not a man of repressions. He will tell you frankly that he doesn't like the servile, regimented press of Rio; that he hopes Brazil will soon outgrow her present allergy against the free and the clear-minded. Aranha is an adventurer to the left, less by imperious urge of conscience than because of his intelligence and good taste. Men of the left are largely brainier than those of the right; they are certainly more creative. Aranha likes brainy and creative people. At the Itamaraty, the Palace of the Foreign Office, he has surrounded himself with intellectuals . . . the best he could seduce: authors, poets, musicians, historians, who by contrast make Downing Street look like an asylum for defectives. And when first-rate writers come to Rio, as to Frederick the Great and the Russian Catherine, Aranha is at their service. I do not mean that he formally receives them in his office; the usual procedure of all cultivated governments. He goes to their hotel room, he meets them in the town cafés: subtly he insinuates himself as their equal.

A final reason why Aranha is to the left, is that he is intelligent enough to have figured from the beginning that Democracy is going to win. He suspects that the victory will be something less than a hundred per cent pure. This does not give him sleepless nights.

Vargas has needed Aranha, because his own eyes, preoccupied with balancing the two themes of his fugue, are held *within* the country. He sees neither America nor the world; yet he feels them as a dimension of Brazil. The first question Vargas asked me, when I sat down with him, was about Argentina. Aranha is the left eye of Vargas. The other eye of Vargas is his daughter.

Alzira Vargas do Amaral Peixoto, wife of the Governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro, whose capital is Niteroi, across Rio bay, is a remarkable woman. She is short, homely, but with a vitality so strong that she is sexually attractive. She is good with a pistol (she stood beside her father in the days of the revolution), and she is a perfect hostess. In all her functions, she is as cool as her father. When you talk with him, across a little table, in a little office crowded as a forest, which seems by its matter-of-factness consciously to deny the rhetorical sweep of the Palace, Alzira sits at the table end, with both of you in her eyes. After a while, you begin to realize that she is carefully watching and forging the trends of conversation. When you leave, she goes with you; chats with you tête-à-tête, polishing the rough parts of your impression; doubtless bringing back a finished report to her father.

These figures are political functions of Brazil's latent will to unity and solidification. They are limited; intrinsically they are inorganic,

and they exist because the folk of Brazil have not yet flowed with full dimension into the maturity of political, economic and intellectual life. This maturity must come; the alternative is degeneration and dissolution. But up to this present, Brazil's democracy remains racial, æsthetic, intuitive . . . elementary but elemental. Her spirit still dwells wholly within her body.

CHAPTER IX OUR ISLAND HEMISPHERE

The Three Americas — The One America

THE THREE AMERICAS

I am back in Miami where the Pan American Airways start and close their journeys. I am full of retrospect and prospect. Before braving the tumults of New York, here I shall remain a day or two. The moment, balanced between past and future, is ripe for meditation.

I recall my last hour at Belém. . . . It is three A.M. and I am riding down in the hotel elevator for a spot of breakfast; chatting with an airman on his way to Africa. "Look at me," I hear. In the corner of the cage is Mrs. Norman Armour, the Russian-born wife of our Ambassador to Argentina, whose subtle and fragile charm does not conceal her firm integrity. By a coincidence, they are on their way back to Buenos Aires from a brief vacation; they will take the same plane southward with Vinicius de Moraes, while I fly alone to the north.

For weeks, Vinicius and I have been close companions, and it will be hard to leave him. There is in him so much of Brazil; he has taught me so much more than he imagines! By the logic of analogy, another friend, far distant, comes to my mind: Marina Nuñez del Prado, the Bolivian sculptress. Marina's lineage, on both sides, back to the early colonial days of Alto Peru, is Spanish without a trace of Indian blood. Yet by spirit, temperament and appearance, she is Aymara. Her nature of woman and of artist has been modelled by the Andes, by the airs and foods that modelled the Aymara. Something similar is to be observed in Vinicius de Moraes. This poet, possibly the loveliest of all the young singers of Brazil, stems from straight Portuguese stock; his ponderous dolichocephalic head, his fine features and fair skin limn him pure European. Yet by temperament, mode of thinking and of feeling, Vinicius is close to the Forest, close to the Negro.

What does this mean? It means that in America the traits of immigrant races have been sustained, altered, or virtually effaced

according to their relative adaptability to the American scene. If the African nature prevails in Brazil or Cuba, it is because Brazil and Cuba nourish this forest nature. If the Anglo-Saxon nature persists in our New England, it is because the hard winters and flaming summers of our North nourish, while they amend, this nature. Men of non-Anglo-Saxon blood in our North (Negroes or Latins, for instance) will gradually acquire analogous traits, in so far as they are permitted to adapt themselves successfully. Men of non-African blood in a land like Brazil will gradually, in temperament and taste, acquire characters that resemble the African. The Swiss psychoanalyst, C. G. Jung, bore this out, when he discovered in many of the Americans who came to him traits of the subconscious mind similar to the American Indian's. Under the huge discrepancy of blood, there was a gradual selective *convergence* of character brought about by the same earth which ages ago acted upon the Indian and today acts upon us.

This of course is simplification; but it points to the one fertile viewpoint for a discussion of race. To say that the African, if he would prosper in America, must lose his African traits, is false. To say that he must *retain* his African traits is equally false; and even more dangerously sentimental. His ancestral character is not a static, but a dynamic heritage that will evolve or devolve in his new life according to natural and cultural selection. What is creatively adjustable to American needs must survive; but it will be African only by analogy. And this is no mere instinctual process. It requires social and cultural freedom. Race democracy is a *first* element, in the formation of a new world culture.

We have the same problem as the lands to our South. With most of our ethnic strains, we do well. With the African, we sin abominably. And this failure is dangerous for the intrinsic reason that it suppresses the natural selective evolution of certain vital elements in and by our world. Our democracy is being poisoned at its source; more precisely, it is being ill-nourished. Much of our admirable democratic structure is built upon this basic lack, as a house upon sands.

I walk the streets of Miami. . . . The semi-tropic sun seems to bleach these white Americans; the white Ibero-Americans, it toasts or broils; the Negroes are well-done already. The whole white town is pallid, two-dimensional: flimsy houses, slick shops, adding up to nothing; and the men who made this boom-town, ghosts—only their gesture of magnificence lives on. The Negroes belong better; and their town, as usual in our South, is shanties. I recall the stops of our plane, as we flew north from the Amazon: two islands, Trinidad and Haiti. . . .

The keynote of the Haitian is dignity. The tropic forest is in him; it is his poise, his ease at taking life through his whole organism—as it were, through his skin and the organs under his skin; rather

than fragmentarily (as with the modern European and American) through either his mind or his will or his nerves and emotions. But Christianity and France have fertilized this Haitian forest. Therefore, the little rebellious land could produce a national hero who is the spiritual peer of Abraham Lincoln. Toussaint L'Ouverture, the real man, is unknown even to the majority of his countrymen. He was great, not because he was a Negro rebel, a fierce Negro warrior-patriot; but because in his little island and his little war, he transcended the limitations of colour; and came to think and to act not as a Negro but as a man. For this, his own associates, to whom race-consciousness was the ultimate value and race-freedom the one goal, betrayed him. Toussaint in his universal humanity transcended his nation, as the Hebrew prophets transcended theirs.

My eyes bring me back to Miami: Miami, the symbol of an era its promoters were sure would never end. Miles of antiseptic bungalows and villas, of gas stations and auto-accessory shops, of crowded commercial streets that lack the lustre even of garishness; and the thinned-out sons and daughters of the pioneers walking in slacks, like wraiths, under the mazdas. Old and young, male and female, on the Miami streets they look alike. They even dress alike: the girls' slacks a bit baggier, their shirts at fuller sail. Only the old farmer-wives stand out, broad of beam and of keel. They are of another era. But their husbands, in helping create this one, have practically vanished within their palm-beach suits.

Between Miami and the beach are the islands, connected by bridge. They are studded with dwellings of white stucco, coral-coloured tile roofs, brilliant sapphire and emerald shutters. Looking back at the skyscrapers on the bayfront, forward to the skyscrapers on the beach, I realize that this shallow playland has created no indigenous architecture. It's all pseudo-mission or pseudo-metropolitan. In the now bare lobbies of the beach hotels there are murals: pseudo-Roman, pseudo-Babylonian, pseudo-Mexican, pseudo-Brazilian. The hotels, that used to be filled with tycoons and their ladies at thirty dollars a bed, now are filled with soldiers. And this too is a symbol.

My thoughts fly from Haiti to Trinidad. Trinidad could create no Toussaint L'Ouverture. If the key of the Haitian is dignity, that of Trinidad's dark populations, Negro and Hindu, is that they have been degraded.

Once I drove the twenty miles from Piarco air field to Port-of-Spain through a wet night of palms fingering the sky; of houses pulsant with dark slumber; of constant stars between ripped clouds. Even in the dark, the East Indians of Trinidad are distinguishable from the Negroes by their shawls and their grace, which is more of the air, less of earth. . . . And once I drove the twenty miles by day. Not a white face; few mulattoes. The houses are hovels, dark at noon along the alien artery of commerce. The buses are trucks with bare planks for seats; most of them with signs "Men Only." The women

walk; the children flow from the shanties to the open jungle, sharing it with the pigs, goats, lizards. The Hindus walk aloof. Their separateness is not pose or will; incarnate in their bodies and pale eyes is *India*. They are aloof, not from the Negroes, but from earth; and earth in Trinidad is *Africa*. The difference of the two subject races makes no discord; a flower and a bird can breathe the same air. But both races stifle!

Port-of-Spain, a big city with well over one hundred thousand inhabitants, is a shapeless, spiritless chaos. At night its central streets are dark; and before war's blackout they were dark. Behind groceries and drygoods stores lurk the illegal grog shops and the brothels. Sweat is dark here; dark is sullen; sullen is the sole passion. The Negroes fill the town with their childish chatter. (Even the language of the British-ruled Negroes, in Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, British Honduras, bespeaks their infantilization; the language of the Hispanic Negroes, in Brazil, Cuba, bespeaks their freedom of spirit.) The white soldiers, the sparse white officials, push through the thick town they own, as through another jungle.

After dinner, on this last visit, I left the Queens Park Hotel for a bit of mild fresh air. Across is the big green, where once I saw a football match between dark teams, and the dark throng hysterical with excitement. Exiled from the world of great decisions, let them vent their need of decisions in kicking a ball to a goal! Almost directly opposite the hotel door, within the dark breath of the green, sit a black girl and black man. The girl calls to me: "Darling, shall I walk with you?" I go on. She gets up, leaving her boy on the bench, and follows. "Why not, darling?" On my way back, although it is very dark, she sees me coming and walks toward me. "Darling," she says, "follow me." Opposite, a hundred yards down from the hotel, is a bright-lit cottage; on the porch officers and gentlemen drink; and in the open hall, the cool ladies. My heart goes out to the girl; I know the gnawing hunger of this imperial island; the corroding spiritual hunger. I pass the girl with a greeting; and when I reach the bench where she sat, the black boy eyes me. Is he a pimp or a friend? Evidently he finds it in order that a girl of his race should hire out her body, for an hour, to a man of mine. All my race has, that he needs, is money. Even if I took the girl, *his* girl, I should not have her; I could not touch her. The contempt of our white rule (waning) crackles in the dark between his eyes and mine.

What I felt in Trinidad is in Jamaica and Barbados; is in Egypt and Singapore and India: is the blight of the British Empire and its essence. Hard it is to realize that these blacks of Port-of-Spain are of the race of Haiti; cousins of Cuba and Brazil. Wherever the British arm rules, Africans and East Indians become a depressed population.

And Britain's attitude toward the dark races: is it not also ours? Is it not the same which Germany has brought to a demoniacally

logical conclusion? If there are "inferior" races, why not a superior race? It is time to study the disease which is in us, *while we fight it!*

We need broad generalizations for our social and cultural thinking, as engineers need the formulæ of physics. In both cases, they are working approximations, certain to shift with deepening awareness; as, for example, Newton's mathematics was amended by the non-Euclidean, Einstein, the quantum theory. Man is an infinitely more complex field than physics. Therefore our generalizations on man, compared to those of algebra or geometry, are at once more crude and more shifting . . . precisely because the human substance is more subtle and eternal. Thus, the generalization of the "three Americas." It ignores deep distinctions, in order to give us a conceptual tool for *thinking* America at all.

When I call the United States and Canada "one America" whose signature is Anglo-Saxon, I am aware of French Quebec; I know the weight and strength of non-Anglo-Saxon elements in the United States; the ever widening and deepening contributions of Latin, Negro, Slav, Jew, Celt, to our symphonic nation. Nevertheless, our dominant note . . . political, psychological, cultural . . . is an adaption from British sources. Language has played a great role in this; for our words shape and limit the scope of our thinking. The Protestant religions have played a great part; even among those who have consciously abandoned the credos of their fathers. Most influential of all has been the excellent adaptability of British mores and values to the pioneer life of temperate North America and to the needs of a commercial-industrial civilization.

With far wider and subtler variations within it, we may call the American countries of "the domain of Spanish" a second America. Nations like Cuba have a strong Negro strain. Nations like Mexico, Bolivia, Peru, are profoundly determined by the high Indian cultures. Nations like Costa Rica are predominantly Spanish; like Argentina and Chile, have strong European populations other than the Spanish. Yet they form one America, because of Spain and of the incidence with Spanish traits of the high Indian cultures. Mexico, for instance, in which the inhabitants without Indian blood are a small minority, is a deeply Hispanic country; more Spanish in character than Argentina. And yet basic Hispanic elements persist in their Argentine transformation; and converge with the primordial Indian traits of the gaucho. Even in a country where the Negro is strong, like Cuba, the African element has been Hispanized. Cuba's music is close to Brazil's in idiom; but its accent, rhythm and meaning are closer to the Hispanic musics. Between all the American nations that speak Spanish, there is a strong family resemblance, which is determined not alone by language and the common heritage of history and religion, but more deeply by the selective convergence of Spanish and Indian traits upon a common American present.

The third America is Brazil. Brazil's racial elements are almost identical with those of Hispanic America; the man of Portugal is not far from the Spaniard; and the African and Indian components of Brazil are of course close to those of our "second America." Yet Brazil is distinct; as distinct, indeed, from the other great family of Ibero-America as she is from us. The Indian of the great tropical forest, as we have seen, is at an adaptive disadvantage, compared to the Indian of Mexico or Peru. On the other hand, the African in Brazil's tropic forest is at an immense adaptive advantage. The Portuguese, moreover, since the earliest Christian centuries, was a strong variant from the other "Spains" of Castile, Aragón, Andalusia, Catalonia. The resultant in Brazil of all these differently developed and selective strains is a people as distinct as we are from the passional and tragic America of Spain: a people in certain ways closer to us than to their Iberian brothers.

The three Americas vary in their understanding of each other. The weakest of them, economically and politically, because it is split into nearly twenty republics:—the America that speaks Spanish*—understands itself and the other Americas best. The weak must understand the strong. And in the case of this America, the political weakness is joined with cultural strength. Brazil has a slow cultural gait not unlike ours; a trait of a vast continental country which can take its time about making up its mind. Yet Brazil knows us better than we know Brazil; far better. Brazil's knowledge of the other Ibero-America is weaker. Perhaps one reason why we are better understood by them than they by us, is that we are more accessible to the Ibero-American understanding. There are, of course, hundreds of thousands of peasants from Mexico to Brazil who have scarcely heard of our existence; whereas any American is likely to have attended a balderdash movie "about" Rio. But large numbers of Ibero-Americans have in their past a strain of the European which makes the United States an open book, compared to what the Afro-Indian-Hispanic past is to most Americans.

Yet the reasons for our ignorance lie deeper. The strong need not know the weak neighbour. And our mind, so long as it remains complacently rooted in the shallow empiricism of the eighteenth century, cannot know cultures whose chief expressions are religious and æsthetic. A dimension of reality is lacking from our common consciousness; that is why, when the average American looks south, he sees a distorted vision of "picturesqueness" or violent revolution. But the deeper, because rare, organic consciousness of the Ibero-American can embrace at least the surfaces of our commercial civilization and of our culture of comfort, entertainment and fact-finding. The great dissident voices of our culture: Emerson, Poe, Whitman, Thoreau, have always been recognized and respected

* The reader will not forget that Indian languages are also spoken by millions, especially in Mexico, Paraguay and the Andes.

in the Ibero-Americas. And our masters of technics, industrial or political, have always found Ibero-American disciples.

The relations of the United States with the other Americas have been elementary; calling for little penetration beyond the needs of buying and selling. (There have of course been exceptions: Mexican art, for instance, has influenced our recent art; American archaeologists have done good work in Central America. But the exceptions have not gone deep.) Our diplomatic relations have on the whole been patterned after our rudimentary business intercourse: a combination of bargaining and bulldozing, with rhetorical appeals to our mutual democratic tradition.

The conscious relations between the two Ibero-Americas have not been much better. In Brazil there is an oppressive silence about her neighbours, although Mexico enjoys a remote high esteem. In Argentina the silence is broken too often by shallow irrelevancies about Brazil. The Spanish-speaking republics have little sense of unity on the political plane; they are but vaguely aware of Brazil as a potential power from whose growth they may all profit. Lack of functional intercourse is the chief hindrance for good inter-Ibero-American relations. There is not trade enough; although it grows. Argentine wheat, for instance, goes increasingly to Brazil in exchange for coffee. Uruguay and Chile know far more sharply their need of relations with the United States than with Brazil or with each other. The pervasive inter-Ibero-American feeling is cultural. And it is likely to ignore the difference between Brazil and the other republics. To the poets and novelists of Spanish-speaking America, Brazil is "one of us"—and to the social revolutionaries, also.

THE ONE AMERICA

Variety, confused, is weakness; integrated, is life. Rich as the experience of these three Americas has been, their future is a vastly deeper promise. Alfonso Reyes, the great Mexican man of letters, has written: "We have never been able to resign ourselves, from both sides of the linguistic frontier, to the proposition that the American world is a geographic and historic accident; we have ever understood America in the prophetic sense." Sociology, economics, all human history, have conspired to make of the poet's dream necessity. The three Americas need one another to become themselves. The functioning principle of each of the three—and of each political entity within each—must be the One America. As one, they can best do business together. As one, they can stand firm in a dangerous world and conserve their independence. As one, most important of all, they can channel and energize their national powers in a dynamic direction which will ensure health within each frontier and harmony together. Their need is manifest in what

each of them has that the others lack. The relations between them of exchange and mutual nature are organic; they are the relations of integral personalities, each sovereign, yet for the fulfilment of its independence demanding integration with the others.

The three Americas have a more immediate possession than a hemisphere; one without which the hemisphere could easily disintegrate, in political and cultural terms, like Africa or Asia. It is their common sense of democratic destiny; their dynamic will that the term New World shall have a deeper than the geographic meaning in which the discoverers used it. The Jesuits in Paraguay, the Puritans in New England, were remote yet strict collaborators in what became the American Commandment: to build in this hemisphere the new City of Man. The eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century statesmen, who forged the Americas' political independence, turned this early religious aspiration into a secular religion. What it lost in depth, it gained in practicability. Men like Jefferson, Franklin, and their southern disciples who founded the Hispanic republics, were convinced that the New World would issue from properly drafted political constitutions. Their conception of democracy was naïve; but it served to put the vision of free men on the statute books from Canada to Chile.

Freedom is infinitely more complex and tragic than these optimistic children of Rousseau and Locke conceived. The generations since they founded the American republics have had no greater, no more arduous task than to deepen the American religion of democracy. The United States played the leading role in its establishment; in the actual writing it down as the basis of all American law and in the development of social-political and mechanical technics for its propagation. The peoples of America Hispana, politically and economically our backward disciples, have played the leading role in the deepening of the democratic concept. This they have done not by overt doctrine, but by their racially, æsthetically and intellectually more free and more organic ways of living.

The perils of the Americas, and their capacities, complement one another. In the Ibero-Americas, there is danger that the released depths of emotional and æsthetic power, lacking order in political and economic forms, lacking communication, lacking industrial organization, remain in flux and chaos. Our danger is that our stereotypes of economic and political forms, becoming ends and objects in themselves, absorb our love, drain our energies, shallow and deplete our vision. Our life is perilously centrifugal. The life of the other Americas is perilously subjective. We save the lives of our children; through the schools and the mechanized arts of radio, newsprint, movie, we give them intellectual and æsthetic nurture. But we lack values for the substance of this nurture; we lack even the will and the "time" to criticize our lack of values. Our fellow Americans, in the substance of their values as superior to us as we

to them in the matter of roads and the distribution of goods, let their children die; and those that survive, they permit to be exposed to alien, more efficient forms of communication.

The wondrous truth is that the three Americas have nurtured different aspects of the Person, whose full growth in all dimensions is the heart of the common American religion of democracy. The person is not the mere individual. He is the individual aware of his organic and purposive part in the social group and in the Cosmos. These two integrations are not divisible in life; only the needs of analysis may separate them. Integration in the group (which includes concentric bodies from family and work-union to sovereign state and federated inter-nation) requires social justice, race freedom, an ethic of mutual respect and service. Integration in the Cosmos implies the experiences and activities of the arts and religion. And of course, these activities cannot be dissolved from the individual's social and public conduct. Both integrations enlist all man's centres: his instinctive and emotional life, his will, his æsthetic and intellectual thinking. Only when the individual functions on all these planes and toward all these directions, is he a person. And democracy is the one principle of life which requires this wholeness of behaviour; which therefore ineluctably moves toward the development of persons. In the totalitarian and aristocratic systems, for instance, the individual's responsibility toward public action is taken from him and vested in a leader and a caste. In the materialistic forms of socialism and communism that make an absolute of human society, the individual's direct conduit and relation to the Cosmos atrophies and disappears.

Democracy, in the complete sense that I have given it, must include not only all men, but *the whole man*. Freedom must mean growth not only for all men, but for every phase and dimension of the man. Short of this wholeness, as our modern history reveals, democracy develops the poisons to destroy itself; freedom employs its energies, privileges and genius to abolish freedom.

In the United States, there is the will toward social justice. It remains shallow, fundamentally feeble; not only because our way of life fails to generate the capacity to confront the social injustice implicit in our economic institutions; even more because our blindness to the æsthetic and religious dimensions of man, our mute and deliberate contempt for the pre-rational and the organic, deprive us of the energy and insight for creative social action. In many of the Ibero-American countries, *the whole man* has conspicuous acceptance. Yet fails to flourish because of the lack of social-political technics without which man's social dimensions in our modern world cannot possibly develop.

Nevertheless, in the complete sense I have given it, democracy is the dominant will, the dominant intuition, of the three Americas. In this universal value, the American hemisphere is a new world; the concept of One America has meaning.

Now look at the map. You will see that Europe and Asia form one immense mass, with Africa . . . a step below Gibraltar . . . its appendage. Similarly, Australasia with Oceania depends upon Eurasia and the masters of Eurasia. This is the Eastern hemisphere. In area, it is seven-tenths of the terrestrial globe; in population, it is more than nine-tenths of mankind. Look again at the map. See how the vast arm of Asia thrusts from the west into the eye of our hemisphere at Alaska; see how, from the east, Africa looms upon us at the bulge of Brazil. The Americas are an island in this overwhelming land-mass; a minority island surrounded by the far greater lands and populations of the other hemisphere.

The American religion of democracy as I have defined it . . . this bone of our political structure, this blood of our intimate ways, is not shared, and never has been shared, by the overwhelming majority of the human masses. The concept of the person as the fundamental integer of value was born in the Mediterranean world. It is not of the main fabric of the great cultures of India, China, Japan. The Hindu's belief in reincarnation radically limits the person to an ephemeral form, and personal action to an extrinsic value. The Chinese ancestor worship shifts the focus of good to the family and, largely, to the past; in Japan there is a state-idolatry closely akin to the religion of the fascists. Russia's Christian tradition brings her within the domain of the person; Russia's current religion of dialectical materialism definitely—even if only shallowly and temporarily—places her in another camp. In Western Europe, where the religion of democracy was nurtured through its hazardous childhood, it is today engaged in a great struggle for survival. In Germany, Italy, fascized Spain—in fact, on the whole continent, its very existence is threatened. And the threat will outlast the fall of Hitler, since fascism itself is a mere end-product of deep-grained anti-democratic forces within the very texture of modern European thought, and of the whole industrial West: forces which have penetrated into the altars of democracy, Great Britain, France and the United States: forces which unconsciously corrupt in large measure the liberal and radical thought that today complacently “leads” the fight against fascism.

The enemy surrounds us; the enemy is within us. It is the inward enemy that we must ultimately face. For if we overcome the enemy without, we may still break from within. But if we overcome the enemy within, we shall be sound, we shall be whole; and no outward enemy shall break us. The great Oriental cultures, such as the Hindu, have been based upon a sense of the individual very distinct from ours. These are not enemy, but alien cultures. Our modern civilization of techniques, of empiricism and science worship, by reducing the dimensions of man's reality, is a falling away from our own basic vision. Here is the essential enemy. Its alliance, as in the case of Germany, with the alien culture of Japan, points to our fragile position in an overwhelmingly hostile world. The war

against the outward enemy cannot be successfully conducted unless it is understood as a phase of the deep war against the inward enemy, lodged at the very heart of our liberal and radical thought. In this aspect of the deep war for the survival and nurture of the person, Ibero-America has resources as much more developed than ours, as our physical defences and our organized social will against the outward enemy are more developed than Ibero-America's.

We cannot win the true sense of ourselves without a true awareness of our limits; which means, awareness of what lies physically beyond us. Our hemisphere, this minority island, has in the United States, Canada, and, incipiently, Brazil and Argentina, a *continental* psychology. It must be changed for an *island* psychology.

A continental vision, like Russia's, India's or China's, gives to the people a feeling of invulnerability; makes them strong in defence, lethargic in attack. The people that feels itself an island, because it is vulnerable, becomes aggressive. Greece, during its brief unity under Alexander, had the island feeling. Rome, a peninsula, had it; as did Spain, also a peninsula, and in modern times, Britain and Japan. These are all instances of island or "near island" peoples whose aggressiveness was physical. Germany is only superficially an exception. Since the Thirty Years War, the German people have felt themselves an island within the invading sea of France, Russia, Italy and Spain. At first their defensive aggressiveness took an idealistic form: German philosophy and German romanticism. Finally, under the impulse of Prussia, itself an island in the German sea, it became economic expansion and military aggression.

There is in history one case of a people, also surrounded by continental foes, which sublimated its aggressiveness into spiritual terms, and—although by no means perfectly, with many lapses into materialistic aggression—has sustained these terms for ages. I have named the Jewish people. They were a minority "island" within the threat of Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Egypt, Rome. They sent forth their vision through Alexandria to Rome, through Rome to Europe, through Europe to the West; and they conquered. Their victory has long outlived the physical victories of island empires like Greece, Rome and Spain.

That victory created Europe through the great tradition of the person—heart of the Judeo-Christian religion. Europe did not discover America; it created *our* America—the potential new world dedicated to the fulfilment of democracy, the world of *persons*. The sanctity of man has many premises; one is the overcoming of man's impotence before nature, the abolition of economic dearth. Pre-scientific Europe could not fulfill this premise. Its defeatism before unmastered nature moved the medieval fathers to project their democracy to Heaven. Our America was created by Europe as a first instinctive step in a transposition of democracy from Heaven to earth. This required not alone land, but tools. The same will that made Europe Christian created the machine. The Ameri-

can hemisphere must become an island dedicated to the democratic will of creating persons; implemented by the technics that alone can give to man the peace, leisure and knowledge to become a person.

How are we to know that if our hemisphere does achieve an island psychology, it will not translate its defence aggressiveness into physical terms? become another island empire in the bad way of Japan or Britain? The Jews were saved by their smallness; they could conquer only through the Word. Our hemisphere, as the democratic Island, will be saved only if it continues to be, progressively, three Americas . . . by the variety and by the equal sovereignty of its components. If our island psychology were to generate an economic and military imperialism (there are threats of this, like the "American century" of certain journalists), there will be no hemisphere at all, beyond geography. For our aggressiveness will throw Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru into the hands of whatever power in Europe or Asia or both, stands ready to counterpoise us. And in two more generations the immense resources of South America (Brazil alone would suffice) will have torn our hemisphere asunder into crippled fragments under whose shards democracy would stifle.

A programme for hemisphere union must contain these basic propositions:

(a) The return of Latin American public wealth, such as mines and oil, now in the hands of American capital, to the peoples of the respective countries. This process may take the form of loans to the governments as the means for buying back the properties at values which should consider past profits as amortization.

(b) At least a negative guarantee of basic democratic governments for all the republics, in the form of a refusal to recognize obvious dictatorships. The time has surely passed when any people dares to say that the kind of government in a neighbouring country is none of its business. Democracy is safe nowhere, so long as totalitarianism is rampant anywhere. The American republics, considering themselves a family, have the right to keep their democratic house in order. This is a proposition dangerous and difficult to enact. Its premise at least should be accepted as a beginning. Of course, enforcement should always be a joint, collective effort.

(c) We must face our failure in race democracy. We cannot expect confidence in the American republics, so long as we continue to discriminate against a minority as important as the Negro, and to make of him an inferior nation within our nation.

(d) Cultural and intellectual exchange between our America and the others will remain a frothy failure so long as it is left

in the hands of benevolent committees and individuals without authority. It should begin in our schools. All American children should be required to study the comparative civilizations and cultures of the other Americas. The histories of African and of Amerindian cultures should become at least as important in our classrooms as the politics of the dynasties of Europe. Spanish or Portuguese should be a compulsory part of our primary education, as English should be a compulsory part of education in the other Americas.

These points suggest basic directions for American leadership. To undertake them seriously would be the demonstration of our democracy for which the Ibero-American peoples are looking. Such demonstration would win them to work with us. Anything less fundamental will continue to invalidate the thousand and one minor good deeds and services of our committees. For although we have done much to overcome their distrust, we have not won the confidence of the Ibero-American peoples.

This is the challenge of our American world. We of the United States cannot fulfill our destiny of leadership unless we understand it. Destiny is character. The grammar of leadership is knowledge. The history of four centuries has led the United States to the threshold of leadership and knowledge.

The American hemisphere I envisage will be possible only by the coordination of its three great sovereign personalities; each with its language, each with its vast physical resources, each with its deep human genius. The common ground of this union is simple, single—and deathless, if man is real. It is democracy as I have defined it. Democracy can never go on an imperial raid, like the old island aggressors. Democracy can proceed only on the mission which our religious father founded, who preached its essence: man's destiny to move forward toward the freedom that dwells in justice and toward the knowledge that is love.

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